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# **THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION**



# THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION

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## PREFACE

THIS work on the early history of religion, although comparatively limited as to size, is the result of studies carried on for many years, founded partly on literary sources, partly on my own field research. The views therein expressed have consequently not been written down hastily, but after mature consideration of the many and difficult problems presented by primitive religion. In spite of my criticism of certain ethnological schools and theories of the subject, I have tried to do them justice by citing their evidence as fully as space permitted. I therefore venture to hope that my work, apart from the interest it may awaken in scientists in this field, may also claim a *raison d'être* as a handbook for beginners.

HELSINGFORS, *March, 1935.*

R. K.



## INTRODUCTION

THE modern science of Comparative Religion has, from the start, paid particular attention to the problem of the origin of the belief in a supernatural world and the religion of so-called "primitive" peoples. So many works, in fact, have been written on the "origin of religion" or "primitive religion" that one who ventures to add to their number needs to state specially his reason for such an undertaking. For my part I should say that being new, the science of comparative religion is naturally making rapid progress, and fresh facts likely to throw light on religious phenomena at the lower stages of culture are constantly being presented. It is natural, therefore, that our views on the subject should change in proportion as our insight into its essential elements grows, many older theories proving untenable and new hypotheses forcing themselves upon us.

In this book, of course, many facts familiar through earlier works on the subject are adduced, but in addition much new material is presented which may give it some value independent of the theories set forth. Most of this new material is collected from two very different areas. One is South America, where I travelled for six years studying the religious beliefs and customs of several Indian tribes representing different stages of culture. The other is the Finno-Ugrian area, where Finnish and Russian ethnologists have been at work in the last decades and in former times, bringing to light a body of facts which form a valuable addition to our knowledge about religious life at an early stage of evolution. These new facts, however, are known only imperfectly to international science, being written to a great extent in languages not generally understood in Europe. In view of these new facts, and specially of those collected by myself among the South American Indians or from little-known books on them, I have, in many cases, reached conclusions on controversial questions which differ considerably

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from those of other scientists. At the same time, I am quite aware of the difficulty of general conclusions of any real validity in regard to so vast and complicated a subject as primitive religion.

A few words may be said as to the sources from which our knowledge of religion at an early stage of development is derived, and the method I have applied to my own study of the subject. The sources are varied, and opinion differs as to the value to be attributed to them. When the Science of Religion arose in the middle of last century, philology was one of its most important assistant sciences. The epoch-making discoveries within the culture history of many peoples of archaic culture in the beginning and middle of the last century naturally influenced the study of primitive and non-Christian religions. Indiology and the study of the Avesta, Assyriology, and Egyptology became fashionable sciences and gave rise, at first to comparative philology, and soon after, owing to the contents of the sacred books, to the comparative science of religion.

It was easy to find that the various religions, however much they differed from each other in particulars, had essential elements in common and consequently could be compared. We no longer hope to be able to trace in any of these sacred books—in the Veda for instance, as did Max Müller—the beginnings of religion. “Primitive” traits, if any, appear only as survivals from still earlier times in the history of the peoples that created them. There can, however, be no difference of opinion about the highly valuable material they afford for the study of religious phenomena at earlier stages of religious evolution. The records of certain classical writers like Herodotus, Strabo, Pausanias, Varro, Cæsar, Tacitus, Plutarchos, and others, relating to the religious ideas and practices of the ancient oriental peoples, the Greeks, Romans, Teutons, Celts, etc., have a similar value, and more attention is now paid to them than formerly.

The most important material, however, which modern Comparative Religion has at its disposal and makes use of when trying to solve its problems is derived from a wholly different source, that of ethnology. The results achieved in this field during the last decades, or rather since the middle and end of the last century, are well known and account for the unusual

activity evident at present among students of the science of religion. The material which ethnology has brought to light concerning the religious ideas and superstitions, and the rites and ceremonies of so-called primitive peoples in different parts of the world, is so vast that it is almost impossible for one person to master it completely. There is much controversy, however, as to the valuation of this material and the interpretation of the ethnological facts. Above all, to what extent can they throw light on the problem of the origin of religion? This is an important methodological question with which I shall presently deal in stating my own position.

The comparative method which the Science of Religion applies to religious phenomena implies that between these phenomena there are not only dissimilarities but also essential similarities, thus enabling them to be compared. The phenomena are classified into groups according to their characteristics. From these, certain general laws are deduced with supposed validity for religion at large.

A method of this kind, of course, is founded on the assumption that peoples now existing in various parts of the world are, in spite of racial differences, and different geographical and social milieus, identical in regard to their psychical character. Owing to the uniformity of the human intellect, the religious thoughts of primitive peoples will necessarily tend in the same direction, independently of possible culture-contact. The history of religion shows numerous instances of such "elemental ideas", or *Elementargedanken*, to use a term introduced by the German ethnologist A. Bastian. To these belong, undoubtedly, the whole primitive "philosophy" called *animism* and the system of primitive ideas constituted by so-called *magic*.

On the other hand, it is a fact that ideas, customs, and institutions can be transmitted from one people to another through historical contact. Many myths, it has been shown, were diffused from one land to another, thus explaining the fact that they exist in much the same form among peoples who geographically, and even racially, were widely separated. We are confronted here with one of the leading controversial questions in social anthropology to-day, and in regard to which the methods of different ethnological schools are at great variance: natural evolution or cultural diffusion?

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The evolutionary school, founded by Darwin himself and in anthropology proper by such men as Herbert Spencer, Lewis Morgan, Letourneau, E. B. Tylor, Lord Avebury, and others, has, without denying the possibility of culture-contact, started from the assumption that uniformity in customs and beliefs among different savage peoples must be explained chiefly by the uniformity of the less developed human mind itself. It regards the high culture, characteristic of the civilized peoples of our day, as the result of a slow progressive evolution through different stages of savagery and barbarism.

An entirely different view is taken by a school of ethnologists, represented in England notably by W. H. R. Rivers, and in the German scientific world by Frobenius, Graebner, and Father W. Schmidt and his pupils. They lay special stress on cultural diffusion, even going so far as to regard the analysis of cultural relations as the first and true task of ethnology. [1] The advocates of this school are generally little inclined to admit the possibility of an independent origin for customs and ideas. In conformity with this view, they are averse on principle to all "psychological" explanations of religious and social phenomena.

The evolutionary school, which, to quote E. B. Tylor, treats "the history of mankind as part of the history of nature", and applies to the study of man the same method as is used in natural science, at present has its most decided opponent in the Catholic school of ethnologists represented by Father Schmidt and his adherents. Father Schmidt is also the most fervid advocate of the theory of "culture centre" (*Kulturreislehre*) as set forth by the Culture History school. This theory is open to so many objections that there is no need to deal with it at length.

It is interesting to note, however, that, in spite of the indefatigable energy with which Father Schmidt, both in his special review *Anthropos* and in his works, combats the theory of cultural evolution (der *Evolutionismus*), there is more agreement between the two schools than one might at first think. The latter speaks of low and more advanced "stages" of evolution, the culture-history school of different *Kulturstufen* which have followed each other historically and are still represented in the "culture centres" distinguishable among the different races of mankind. It may be that even the evolutionary

theory is too schematic and not wholly in touch with reality in outlining the regular and straightforward development of culture through different stages; but, in its mania for systematizing and its arbitrary historical reconstructions, the culture-history school of ethnology certainly outdoes all others.

It is not enough that in such widely separated parts of the world as Oceania and South America much about the same different "*Stufen*" of culture are distinguished; every "stage" in one part of the world has its almost exact equivalent in a similar stage in another. Thus the "Urkultur" or Tasmanian culture in Oceania answers exactly to the primitive culture which in South America, according to Father Schmidt, is represented chiefly by such peoples as the Fuegians, the Botocudos, and certain Chaco tribes, and in Africa in the pygmies of equatorial Africa, the Bushmen, and so on. Moreover, each of these particular types of culture is characterized by a certain social status and by certain peculiarities, exactly indicated, within the sphere of material and intellectual culture. Now in the first place it may be greatly doubted whether we are entitled to speak of any "Urkultur" at all in regard to the savages of to-day; but this is a question to which I shall return in the next chapter.

I want particularly in the present connection to draw attention to the arbitrary way in which the said school of ethnologists distinguishes different strata of culture and classifies savage tribes, widely separated from one another in time and space, as belonging to one and the same "culture centre". In South America, for instance, neither the Fuegians nor the Chaco tribes are more "primitive" than most other South American tribes. On the contrary, the Fuegians, who, as is well known, have been under European and Christian influence for many decades, must be classified decidedly among the higher of those South American tribes still supposed to be living in a natural state. The beehive-shaped huts, for instance, which are used both in the Chaco and in Tierra del Fuego, need not necessarily be taken as exponents of their generally low level of culture. In the Chaco, at any rate, they must be explained wholly by natural conditions. It is simply the form of hut which can be most easily constructed of the material these tribes have at their disposal. [2]

One of the most obvious mistakes of the so-called culture-

history school of ethnology, particularly as represented by Father Schmidt, is its failure to realize the highly differentiating influence exerted by racial peculiarities and purely natural conditions, such as climate, on the customs and institutions of uncivilized peoples. Another fundamental mistake is the tendency to connect arbitrarily widely different culture elements which have nothing essential in common and the co-existence of which among one and the same people is evidently merely accidental. One may well question, for example, what such culture traits as conical-shaped huts, dug-outs, spear-throwners, bark girdles, penis-envelopes, platform-burial, paternal system of descent, totemism, and sun-mythology, which according to Father Schmidt form the chief characteristics of the "totemic culture" in the whole world, have fundamentally in common that justify our grouping them together in this way. [3]

The lower races can certainly be compared, in a general way, in regard to ideas and customs, but we cannot, even in the same part of the world, graduate them so as to form a definite scale of cultures. All attempts, therefore, to classify them according to abstract schemes such as that hinted at above are doomed to failure. Owing to geographical conditions or other causes, a tribe may stand very low in its material culture, such as the Fuegians and the Australian aborigines. Intellectually and in regard to social development they may, on the other hand, occupy a comparatively high stage of culture like the same "primitive" natives. Under such circumstances their cultural classification must needs be extremely difficult.

When the culture-history school regards the ethnological analysis of culture phenomena as the chief task of the history of civilization and denies the possibility or importance of a psychological explanation, this is another of the school's equally obvious exaggerations. W. H. R. Rivers, the radical representative of this tendency of thought in England, pointed out that savage peoples in general are not able to assign the reason for practising a certain custom and that, as a rule, an ethnologist will inquire in vain about the motives for their actions. [4] This assertion does not hold true of all savage peoples, particularly not, I believe, of those peoples who have preserved their own native culture, while remaining comparatively

free from external influence. Thus, in South America, I was struck by the accuracy with which many independent tribes were able to account for the ideas underlying their religious and magical practices. During my investigations I also came to realize the importance of obtaining the explanation from the Indians themselves. Otherwise many of their customs would have remained either unintelligible or open to misunderstanding. Who, for instance, could understand the peculiar rules of *fasting* observed by the Jibaro Indians, and of which some instances will be given below, unless the curious line of thought upon which they are founded were indicated exactly by themselves?

The existence of elemental ideas, i.e. ideas which are due to the uniformity of the mental constitution of men, is an indisputable fact. From this it follows that there are many culture-phenomena which, although appearing in the same form among different peoples, may still have an independent origin and development. On the other hand, it is an equally indisputable fact that the various human races have borrowed from each other many of their beliefs, customs, arts, and crafts. The sociologist and historian of religion should therefore always be on his guard against hasty conclusions in one direction or another. If we may say, therefore, that the chief task of sociology and the science of religion is the same as that of every science, namely, to explain the facts with which it is concerned, we may add that inquiry into the possible wanderings of culture-phenomena is another task which ought never to be left entirely out of sight. Here we have two scientific methods which supplement each other but which cannot replace each other. I completely agree with Dr. Westermarck when he points out that "even when the historical connection between customs found among different peoples has been well established, the real origin of the custom has not been explained thereby. It is not a sufficient explanation of a custom to say that it has been derived from ancestors or borrowed from neighbours; this only raises the question of how it originated among those who first practised it; for a custom must have a beginning." [5]

For my part, I should add that the ease with which culture-phenomena are transmitted from one people to another may vary greatly. Myths and legends, for instance, evidently have

more tendency to "wander" and are more easily borrowed than fundamental religious ideas and complicated rites. This is due to the conservative character of religion in general and particularly of religious cult. The consequence is that, within this department of custom and thought, peoples are less liable to external influence than in many others. Besides which, peoples cannot "borrow" elements of a cult from each other unless they are psychologically qualified for such borrowings.

The comparative method in the study of religion should be applied with due caution. Two religious phenomena which are outwardly similar may, in spite of this similarity, be quite different in nature and due to different causes. Induction in regard to a certain idea or a certain custom ought to be as complete as possible. Above all, great caution is necessary when we come to draw general conclusions about peoples who belong to entirely different races, or to widely separated geographical milieus, or who represent quite different stages of culture. The authorities and sources from which our material is derived ought to be carefully scrutinized. In all these respects serious faults have been committed in comparative sociology and the science of religion. This is the chief reason why the results have so often proved doubtful and been so short-lived. It is astonishing, for instance, to find what little pains theoretical scholars have taken in this field to establish the reliability of the statements upon which they founded their theories, these often touching religious problems of fundamental importance. Popular books published by passing travellers and collectors of ethnographic curiosities, who have stayed among a tribe for a few days or weeks, seem to be considered equally reliable as ethnological sources as monographs written by trained ethnologists or missionaries who have lived among a people for years, perhaps for decades.

It is this uncritical use of literary sources with their resultant generalizations which is responsible for the unsatisfactory character of most of the older comparative works on the religion, customs, and institutions of the lower peoples. In this particular respect a new treatment of sociology and the science of religion is necessary. Even when he deals with the lower religions, the historian of religion should adopt just as critical an attitude towards the documents he uses as the profane historian.

We cannot meet this objection by saying, as does one modern sociologist, that "it is often simply impossible for the most carefully scrutinizing critic to decide whether a certain statement is accurate or not, and it may even be difficult to form a just idea of the general trustworthiness of an ethnographical author." [6] This may be so in some cases, just as there may be different opinions as to the trustworthiness of an historic document, but in the majority of cases it does not hold true. If we really had no means of distinguishing between falsehood and truth in regard to ethnological sources, we should have to admit that the results arrived at in comparative anthropological works are more or less illusory. We can usually discover, at any rate, how long the author in question stayed among the people he describes, whether he learnt the language or not, whether he acquired his information through interpreters or founded his statements on personal observation, whether he was particularly trained for studies of this kind or not, and so forth. It is not difficult, even after a superficial glance at the literature used in many comparative works on the customs of the lower races, to establish that at least fifty per cent of the authors quoted were not qualified to give trustworthy information about the peoples with whom they dealt, and that, from a scientific point of view, their works are consequently valueless.

A wholesome reaction, therefore, is at present noticeable against the sociological method in so far as it aims at an indiscriminate and too general a comparative study of the lower races in the entire world. The opinion is gaining more and more ground that the study of religious and social phenomena should be limited at first to definite groups of related tribes or definite culture areas, in regard to which the ethnologist is able to proceed with greater care and thoroughness, and particularly to apply more criticism to the sources used. Not until a great number of careful and detailed monographs on definite classes of social and religious phenomena from different parts of the world lie before us should we proceed to write general comparative works. [7]

As far as religion is concerned, we are at present, it seems to me, in a better position when aiming at a synthesis than when dealing with purely sociological phenomena. Excellent monographs on the religious ideas and customs of the lower races in different parts of the world already exist. These, in addition to

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monographs on the religions of archaic peoples, may make it possible for us to state the general traits of religious evolution at the earlier stages of culture. Be this as it may, attempts of this kind are not without interest and importance, since they give us a survey of the many difficult problems put before us by the comparative science of religion and of the tentative efforts to solve them.

# PRIMITIVE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

## CHAPTER I

### THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

THE word " primitive ", so frequently used by the modern sciences of religion and sociology, can be taken in two different senses. Partly it can be taken to signify what, in a strictly chronological sense, is original and primary ; partly, in a more general sense, it may be taken to signify what, as regards its *structure*, is primordial and imperfect. In the first case, the problem of primitive religion is the same as the problem of the *origin* of religion : in the latter, we are concerned only with that form of religion which is the lowest known to us historically, above all the one represented by the lowest uncivilized peoples existing at present. It will soon be seen that, in this book, in this latter sense particularly, I use the word " primitive ". It may be that the rudimentary religious thought found among many backward peoples of to-day comes relatively near that stage of religion attained by our human ancestors, but nothing entitles us to assert that there still exist primitive tribes which have remained intellectually at this primary stage of culture. Practically, however, it is difficult to keep the two senses wholly apart, and the problem of the origin of religion is of such great historical interest that we need to pay some attention to the theories set forth at different epochs on the subject.

Science will never be able to trace, with absolute certainty, the first beginnings of human culture, still less the first beginning of the belief in a supernatural world, characteristic, as far as we know, of all human races which exist or have ever existed. In dealing with this problem we merely use hypotheses of greater or less probability. We cannot follow the history of religion down to its origin. We do not know when the being which first deserved the name of *man* appeared on the earth. About his intellectual, as well as his physical condition, we can form an opinion only by way of deductions or conclusions *ex analogia*.

The extreme difficulty or even insolubility of the problem, however, has not always been realized by the representatives of the science of religion. We need not speak of that epoch, not so far removed, when the Old Testament was regarded as an infallible authority on the early history of man, with the result that the first form of religion was supposed to have been a clear, although simple, belief in one single god, a belief which later degenerated into polytheism and demonism. This theory is still of interest inasmuch as, in a modified form, it has frequently been renewed by scholars apparently founding it on a more scientific basis.

At the end of the last century, several prominent historians of religion believed that, in the religious history of the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, and Indians they had found traces of a "primary monotheism", which later had more or less disappeared. Max Müller rejected the theory of an original monotheism in the Veda religion, but his own theory on "henotheism" reflects the same romantic spirit conspicuous in many of his contemporaries.

Like monotheism, henotheism is only conceivable if we assume in primeval times a comparatively high standard of culture prevailed among mankind, and that this later fell into decay, producing fetishism, demonism, and other lower forms of religion and superstition. According to this view, the state of savagery and barbarism in which many uncultured peoples live at present is not a primary but a secondary phenomenon, the result of a degeneration of culture. This is the old theory of degeneration as contrasted with the modern theory of progress supported by the scientists of the evolutionary school.

The same general view of the development of human culture at the lower stages, namely, that on essential points there has been a movement backward and not forward in civilization, from higher forms to lower, underlies certain other theories which assume a relatively high standard of religious thought in primeval times. Such was the case, for instance, with the theory which Robertson Smith set forth at the end of last century in his well-known work on the religion of the Semites, and, according to which, totemism was the original form of religion. Totemism, it should be understood, as conceived by Robertson Smith, was, in fact, a low form of monotheism, a monotheism which had not been limited to the Semitic peoples but had marked a

universal religious stage. In conformity with his theory, this orientalist and the school he founded contended that degeneration on the whole had been more characteristic of human cultural development than progression. This view, for instance, is strongly set forth by E. B. Jevons in his *Introduction to the History of Religion*.

Early in this century the old theory of primary monotheism and the degeneration theory upon which it is based were revived by Andrew Lang. It is chiefly due to his influence that it has advocates among ethnologists even to-day. Andrew Lang apparently gave it a firmer foundation by supporting it with ethnological arguments. His theory of a monotheism among the lower races of mankind which is a survival from primitive times has, in its turn, been revived by the Catholic ethnologist Father Schmidt. In a special chapter I propose to deal with the Supreme Beings of primitive peoples and examine the main arguments adduced in support of the theory about a primary monotheism by Father Schmidt and his pupils.

No theory of human culture, however much it may emphasize the progress made by man in his long history from primitive times to our days, can deny that this history also gives evidence of cases of degeneration. Just as the degradation theory recognizes progression, so of course the progression theory recognizes degeneration as a powerful influence affecting the course of culture. Realizing the truth that human culture has known both advance and retreat, we also acknowledge the necessity of using the word "evolution" with due caution. And, with equally great caution, we ought to use the word "primitive" when applied to low savage races of our own days.

Obviously, the word has been much misused, especially by anthropologists of the evolutionary school. No savage tribe exists whose mental and cultural state would answer even approximately to that of "primeval" man. Even the rudest savage tribes of to-day have a long history behind them. It is impossible to assume that during the hundreds of thousands of years of their existence they have remained entirely unaltered. The very art of making fire which has been known to all historic peoples, but which must have been unknown to our first human ancestors, has pushed the former far in advance of the latter. If romantic thinkers such as Rousseau and his modern epigones, among them in a certain sense Andrew Lang, have unduly

idealized savage man and uncultured human society, on the other hand there has frequently appeared, especially among evolutionists, a contrary tendency, namely, to exaggerate unduly his primitive nature. In this respect it is characteristic that Darwin himself regarded the Fuegians, whom he met during his voyage round the world, as a people standing so extremely low in culture that ever since they have been classified among the most backward known primitive races. I have already pointed out that this opinion must be considered erroneous. I may add that, whereas their language, for instance, was regarded by Darwin as half animal-like and not even as articulate, the English missionary Thomas Bridges, a few decades later, noted down in this same language a vocabulary of no less than 32,000 words.

However, we have also seen that the error of taking low savage tribes of to-day as representing "primeval" man in their general state of culture has by no means been limited to extreme "evolutionists". A school, diametrically opposed to that of Darwin, the German culture-history school of ethnology, adheres dogmatically to the same view, referring the Fuegians, together with certain other low races, to an imaginary *Urkultur*. Other anthropologists, although they have not accepted the theory of culture centres, have nevertheless shown a marked tendency to exaggerate the primitiveness of certain modern savages, presumably occupying the lowest stages of cultural development, such as the Australian aborigines, and have built upon this supposed fact general theories about the beginnings of culture among mankind at large.

On this point it is sufficient to bring to mind that it is on Australian evidence chiefly that Sir James Frazer founded his well-known theory according to which, in the evolution of human thought, the stage of religion was preceded by an earlier stage of magic. [1] Similarly, the Melanesians have been regarded as so extremely primitive a race that a whole school of anthropologists likewise do not shrink from bold generalizations, have seen in their idea of *mana* a notion still earlier in the history of religious thought than animism itself.

By emphasizing the fact that there are no longer any "primitive" races of men nor any "Urkultur" in the strict sense of the word, we do not, on the other hand, imply that we must give up the method hitherto followed by modern anthropology, in so far as it uses ethnology as its chief assistant science. The

modern savage does not reflect the mental and cultural state of early man to the extent dogmatically assumed; but, on the other hand, he must by no means be looked upon as a degenerate descendant of ancestors standing comparatively high in culture.

E. B. Tylor, always cautious in his judgments, has expressed the view which may still, I think, on the whole be upheld. "By comparing the various stages of civilization among races known to history, with the aid of archaeological inference from the remains of prehistoric tribes, it seems possible," he says, "to judge in a rough way of an early general condition of man, which from our point of view is to be regarded as a primitive condition, whatever yet earlier state may in reality have lain behind it. This hypothetical primitive condition corresponds in a considerable degree to that of modern savage tribes, who, in spite of their difference and distance, have in common certain elements of civilization, which seem remains of an early state of the human race at large. If this hypothesis be true, then, notwithstanding the continual interruptions due to degeneration, the main tendency of culture from primeval up to modern times has been from savagery towards civilization." [2]

The relative stagnancy, which is always characteristic of the culture of savage peoples and forms a contrast to the activity and development appearing in all departments of the social life of civilized peoples, entitles us to assume that the former, in spite of all possible cases of degeneration, are nearer the origins of cultural evolution than the latter. This assumption, as pointed out even by Tylor, is confirmed by all our knowledge of the early history of mankind.

On this point prehistoric archaeology supports ethnology in a most valuable way. By no means has archaeology brought to light any evidence which would show that, in earliest times, a comparatively high human culture prevailed. On the contrary, it has revealed a culture standing far below even that possessed by the rudest savage people of our own days. If this is so, we may expect to find, among many modern savages of low culture, features which give us some guidance in trying to discover the laws at work in the first formation of man's belief in supernatural powers.

The information archaeology is able to supply as to the religious state of prehistoric man is certainly very scanty. Almost our only sources are the grave-finds. Many of the weapons,

implements, ornaments, remains of food, etc., which have been found in prehistoric graves, however, seem to show irrefutably that the primitive men who buried their dead in this way believed in the existence of a *soul* which survives the death of the body. Because of this, we may infer that even palaeolithic man in Europe, the contemporary of the mammoth and the cave-bear, was in possession of a sort of religion or belief in spirits.

Evidence to the same effect are those curious wall-paintings encountered in ancient caves in western Europe. Paintings and engravings of mammoth, bison, bear, elk, and other animals, done with wonderful skill by these prehistoric men on the walls of their primitive dwellings, cannot be explained merely as an expression of their aesthetic sense, but must have been connected in some mysterious way with their belief in spirits or souls. Now, if we compare the religious ideas to which the archaeological finds refer with the facts brought to light by modern ethnology about the ideas of uncultured peoples of to-day, we cannot fail to note a remarkable agreement. On these grounds we may also be able to form an opinion about the nature of primitive religious thought in general.

An oft-noted characteristic of the religious ideas and the rites based on them is the conservatism with which they are observed even after the disappearance or change of the cultural milieu to which they originally belonged.

This fact explains why, even among peoples of high civilization, we find numerous traces of ideas and customs which, properly speaking, form elements of primitive culture. History shows that general cultural degeneration was frequently followed by religious degeneration, this marked by a sudden revival of more primitive forms of belief and cult.

It is natural to explain such phenomena as due to a kind of religious atavism or as survivals from stages of culture already passed by the people in question. In the religion of the ancient Greeks, Romans, and other peoples of archaic culture we encounter, for instance, even at the time when their culture was at its highest, numerous traces of such primitive forms of cult as ancestor-worship, the worship of chthonic (earth) deities and of animals, traces of fetishism, etc. These must doubtless be explained as survivals. The popular religion and folklore of most civilized peoples in Europe show similar instances of

survivals, many ancient rites and superstitious practices being kept up and observed, among the lower classes of the population at least, long after their original meaning has been forgotten.

Phenomena of this kind enable us to understand how easily different forms of religion, both higher and lower, blend or combine, and how difficult it is to fix definite limits between them. In fact, religious evolution has hardly any "stages" of religion which can be distinguished clearly one from another. Thus there never has existed a "pure" monotheistic religion. Still more impossible is it to draw a sharp line of demarcation between animism and polytheism. Lower forms of religious belief and cult, animism, fetishism, demonism, witchcraft, may exist, and in most cases do exist, among peoples who, in other respects, have attained a relative montheism in the development of their religious thought.

These religious survivals are of great importance to the student of religion. They complete, in a valuable way, the material supplied by ethnology. But folklore material, when it is used to elucidate questions concerning primitive religion, ought to be treated with still greater caution than that offered by ethnology. Savage peoples who have remained free from external influence generally know the ideas underlying their customs and rites; they are elements of living faith, and can therefore be more easily explained and classified. On the other hand, this is seldom the case with the category of stereotyped habits and usages called survivals. A characteristic of these, as already indicated, is that the very folk who observe them do not know why they do so, or else attach to them a meaning which has nothing to do with the original one. How far such survivals truly reflect "primitive" ideas is consequently a delicate question to solve, and experience shows that they have frequently been strangely misinterpreted.

Among writers of the evolutionary school who have tried to explain the origin of religion there are two who ought to be mentioned above all others: Herbert Spencer and E. B. Tylor. Spencer was one of the first anthropologists to see in the culture of the present-day savage an approximate correspondence to the state of culture represented by early or prehistoric man, and who founded his theory about the beginnings of religion upon facts revealed by modern ethnology.

Like Tylor, Spencer starts from animism. In animism he sees the fundamental stratum from which religion in every form has been evolved, but the word is used by him in a more limited sense than by Tylor. It is to him identical with the deification of the spirits or souls of the dead. According to Spencer, religion has developed out of the primitive worship of departed souls; in particular, the worship of departed ancestors which, as a matter of fact, constitutes an important form of religion among peoples of low culture. From this primitive form of religion some other religious cult is derived, which, in relation to ancestor-worship, is consequently a secondary phenomenon. The worship of inanimate nature, for instance, has, according to Spencer, arisen by spirits of the dead having been thought in one way or another to have taken up their abode in the objects of nature and to be active in natural phenomena. [3]

This is the old theory of the origin of religion set forth as early as the third century before the Christian era by the Greek philosopher Euhemeros, and frequently revived in the history of the modern science of religion. A similar view of the early evolution of religion was taken by the French historian Fustel de Coulangé with special reference to the peoples of antiquity, by Lippert with reference to Aryan peoples, and by Grant Allen as a general theory of the origin of religion.

It is this old theory that Spencer revived, trying to support it by facts gathered from modern ethnology. He tries to show how the belief in a human soul originated, a soul which survives the decay of the body and which, owing to its supposed power to benefit or harm the survivors, becomes the object of a real cult. With the help of numerous instances, Spencer shows how widely spread is this kind of worship in the lower cultures. But whereas this fact is now generally known, it is, of course, much more difficult to show how other forms of religious cult were developed out of the "only true form of religion, ancestor worship".

The facts, for example, which Spencer adduces to explain the origin of animal, plant, and nature worship, which according to him are merely aberrant forms of the worship paid to ancestral ghosts, are not very convincing. Savage children, for instance, misunderstood the tales of their parents about the stars, originally supposed to be the camp-fires of such and such a departed person, and thus originated the identification of deceased ances-

tors with heavenly bodies. Animal-worship also, according to Spencer, arose through some peoples having mistaken certain forms of animal life, such as snakes, lizards, and insects, which often come into the habitations of men, for the souls of their departed relatives, who are supposed occasionally to revisit their old abode. Creatures found in the caves used for burials were likewise taken for the new shapes assumed by the dead. The habit of naming individuals after animals and plants was also largely a cause of their being confused, and so forth. [4]

But although confusions such as these may have played a certain part in the history of religion, they obviously do not offer that satisfactory explanation of the important and widespread forms of primitive religion expected of them. Moreover, Spencer overlooks the tendency of the primitive mind to personify inanimate objects of nature independent of the conception of the human soul.

Spencer's theory, reached by a deductive rather than by an inductive method of research, has therefore often been contradicted. What is unsatisfactory in it, however, it seems to me, is rather the argument than the general view he expresses as to the development of early religion. Since the days of Spencer, modern ethnology has brought to light numerous facts which directly confirm his hypothesis as to the intimate connection between the worship of the dead and the worship of animals, plants, and inanimate objects of nature. Everything, for instance, favours the hypothesis that the religion of the Finno-Ugrian peoples, as existing among the Russian and Asiatic tribes up to our own day, has been developed out of a primitive worship of the dead. The same may be said, I believe, of the religion of the Bantu tribes of Africa and of that of the South American Indians. Even the highly developed state religion of the Incas was at bottom nothing but an ancestor worship in a wonderful system.

The assertion that all spirits and gods in the lower and higher religions are by nature nothing more than deified human souls or spirits of *dead* men, however, cannot be proved as a general theory. On this point Spencer was somewhat prejudiced and dogmatic. On the whole, the relation of the worship of souls to the worship of other animistic beings cannot be unravelled by the general reasoning and doubtful hypotheses of such as Spencer offers, but only by a careful inductive research into the

ideas actually held by different lower peoples. This is a question with which I shall deal again later.

The theory of animism as the original form of religion was set forth by E. B. Tylor in his well-known work *Primitive Culture* of 1871. However much opinions about primitive religion may have varied, the general view, of which Tylor has laid the foundation, has, on the whole, retained its validity. "Animism", as sketched by Tylor, is a fact, however differently we may explain the details of this "primitive philosophy" and whatever place we may assign to it in the evolution of religion. Tylor has established the existence of animism among all low human races and, in a modified form, even among civilized peoples, and in his famous minimum definition of religion he falls back on this essential source of the belief in the supernatural. By religion, Tylor simply means the belief in spiritual beings. Further, according to Tylor, the theory of animism divides into two great dogmas, forming parts of one consistent doctrine: first, concerning the souls of individual creatures, capable of continued existence after the death or destruction of the body; second, concerning other spirits, extending to the rank of powerful deities.

"Spiritual beings are held to affect or control the events of the material world, and man's life here and hereafter; and it being considered that they hold intercourse with men, and receive pleasure or displeasure from human actions, the belief in their existence leads naturally sooner or later to active reverence and propitiation. Thus animism, in its full development, includes the belief in controlling deities and subordinate spirits, in souls, and in a future state, these doctrines practically resulting in some kind of active worship." [5]

Tylor's theory of animism has, as we know, been of epoch-making importance. Its stimulating influence on the modern science of religion can be denied by nobody. The research work on the cult of the dead and the "animism" of the lower races has given rise to a whole literature. Other important aspects of primitive religion may thereby have been overlooked or neglected. At any rate, the theory which sees the origin of religion in the belief in spiritual beings was the object of much criticism in the last decades.

This criticism came partly from those scientists, quite numerous in our day, who, starting from the conception of *mana*,

contended that the animistic stage in the evolution of religion was preceded by a still more primitive "pre-animistic" stage, characterized by a belief in impersonal magical powers. The adherents of this theory show, in general, a marked tendency to underrate the importance of animism as a primitive form of religion, and think they can trace everywhere the ideas of an impersonal magical power. On the other hand, Tylor has been strongly contradicted by the adherents of the theory of primary monotheism, which in animism also sees a secondary phenomenon only.

In the chapters that follow, in which animism and kindred ideas are treated, I shall state in which sense Tylor's theory, in my opinion, may still be maintained. We shall see that the belief in spirits, thus in a certain sense "animism", must still be regarded as the very essence of primitive religion. If, by religion in general, we understand the belief in supernatural powers on which man feels himself to be dependent and which in one way or another he tries to influence in his favour, we may establish the fact, moreover, that there is no people in our day, however low in the scale of human development, which is wholly devoid of religion. When certain anthropologists, Lord Avebury for instance, made statements to the contrary, this was due only to their having used the word "religion" in too narrow a sense. In the subsequent chapters we shall examine more closely the ideas of the Supernatural which occur among the lower races of mankind.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PRIMITIVE MAN: “PRE-ANIMISTIC” THEORY

THE psychology of primitive peoples has often been dealt with both by the general psychologist and the anthropologist. The difficulty of arriving at reliable results on this question arises from the fact, already pointed out, that there no longer exist any truly “primitive” peoples. When we use this word, we mean in general a number of peoples of low culture, living, as we say, in a state of nature but showing great differences in their material culture and social organization, their beliefs, customs, and institutions as well as their general mental characteristics.

The “primitive mentality” about which Lévy-Bruhl, for instance, has written so much in recent years and which is characterized by him as being essentially “prelogical” in opposition to the logical mind of civilized peoples [1] is in fact nothing but a philosophical abstraction without counterpart in reality. Nothing entitles us to assume, for instance, that the Australians, the Polynesians, the arctic peoples of northern Asia and America, the Bantu tribes of Africa, and the Indians of North and South America have all those characteristics ascribed to a primitive mind, or that their thinking is essentially different from our own logical thinking. My experiences from South America, at any rate, are contrary to Lévy-Bruhl’s theory, and ethnologists at work in other parts of the world seem to have arrived at similar results.

Lévy-Bruhl points out that when he ascribes a prelogical mentality to primitive peoples he only means that they are not like civilized men, anxious above all, in their own thinking, to keep away from contradictions. To illustrate how natural such contradictions are to a primitive mind he mentions the Bororó of central Brazil, who, according to Karl von den Steinen, identify themselves with macaws. The red macaws are Bororó and, vice versa, the Bororó assert that they are macaws. According to Lévy-Bruhl this does not imply that, in their own

belief, the Bororó will be changed after death into macaws; they firmly believe that, in spite of their human form, they actually are macaws at the same time, "just as if a larva asserted that it is a butterfly". [2] Now, if we look into von den Steinen's book for his statement about the ideas of the Bororó, we find something very different. Like other South American Indians, the Bororó believe in the transmigration of the soul. "Soul" in the Bororó language is *bupé*—which fact should interest Lévy-Bruhl who *denies* the existence of a primitive conception of the soul. During sleep the soul flies away from the body in the shape of a bird and sees and hears many things. After death a Bororó man or woman is changed into a red macaw, that is, into a bird, like the soul in the dream. After death the medicine-men are also changed into other animals, for instance into fishes. According to the belief of the Bororó, departed men of other tribes would be changed into other kinds of animals; the negroes for instance into black vultures. K. von den Steinen himself, said the Indians, would, at some time, be changed into a white heron, etc. [3]

Is there anything contradictory or "prelogical", to use the words of Lévy-Bruhl, in these ideas? I certainly do not think so. The idea that, after the death of the body, the human soul may take up its abode in other bodies, even in those of animals, is quite logical and as a matter of fact is found not only among uncivilized peoples but also in the higher religions. It is held, in fact, by thousands of civilized peoples to this very day. In the lower cultures, as we shall see later, totemism, among other things, is intimately connected with this idea. But the way in which Lévy-Bruhl in the said passage uses von den Steinen's report on the Bororó is very characteristic of his whole method. He does not quote the statements of ethnologists as they stand and allow them to speak for themselves, but alters them with a view to bringing them into conformity with his own theories and adduces them to support these same theories. It is easy to see that, with such a method, we can prove almost any theory. The same argument exactly meets us in Lévy-Bruhl's recent theory that peoples of low culture have no idea of a soul.

Although the thinking of so-called primitive peoples is at bottom just as logical as that of civilized peoples, there are still certain peculiarities which seem to be characteristic of an undeveloped intellect in general and which we must take into

account if we are to understand their religious views. Among these peculiarities there is the tendency, for instance, to generalize hastily on occasional experiences and to assume a real causal connection between phenomena and incidents which accidentally follow each other in time. If, for example, in an Indian house, somebody happens to fall ill and die shortly after a strange guest has arrived, the stranger will in all probability be accused of having brought the illness to the house and be regarded as the real cause of the accident. *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, is the Indian's way of reasoning in such cases. I frequently had experiences of this kind among the tribes I visited, and we learn of similar experiences among other primitive races.

Neither animistic "philosophy" nor the primitive science called "magic" or "witchcraft" would be possible, I believe, without some tendency of this nature. But, at the same time, it must be emphasized that the tendency to draw rash conclusions and make precipitate generalizations has, by no means, been limited to "primitive" peoples, but appears also among civilized peoples. And I presume that if a savage were intelligent enough to criticize certain modern theories on primitive psychology and the logical absurdities which their authors ascribe to uncultured peoples, he would wonder whether there was not something "prelogical" in the thinking of the very philosophers who formulated such theories.

Clearly, if a primitive mind were really so unable to reason according to the laws of thought familiar to us, as has been asserted by Lévy-Bruhl and his adherents, we should have no means of understanding their religious ideas, for instance; their thought and our civilized thought would clearly be incommensurable. But happily it is not so. The more we are able to penetrate into the psychology of uncultured peoples—by no means impossible—the more we realize the inaccuracy of the old view, especially common among theoretical anthropologists, who, in primitive ideas and customs, could see only a manifestation of ignorance, superstition, and inability to think.

My own experience of the Indians, at any rate, is that most of their "superstitions" have an underlying stratum of reality and that their ideas of the world, of man and of life, however naïve they may seem to us, reveal on the whole both an extraordinary power of observation and an acute logic. The premises,

of course, may be, and are frequently, erroneous, and the conclusions accordingly appear wrong or even absurd, but this is another matter. If, without being prejudiced by our "civilized" ideas and preconceived theories, we try honestly to understand, for instance, their animistic beliefs, undoubtedly, as I have said, the basis of primitive religion, we shall soon find that they are built up in an admirably logical way.

At all stages of religious evolution the essence of divinity is mystery. What is "Divine" is always something mysterious, wonderful, incomprehensible, something that awakens in man sentiments of admiration, fear, and awe, at the same time as it manifests itself as supernatural power. Rightly has it been said that between the known and the unknown world is the spark of religion kindled in man. A god who could immediately be comprehended, the mystery of whom could be completely penetrated by his worshippers, would cease simultaneously to be a god. On the other hand, the Divine need not necessarily be identical with the Sublime or with a Power infinitely elevated above nature. On the contrary, in the lower religions it generally enters into or coincides with nature. As a matter of fact, we find on close inquiry that primitive man's deeply rooted belief in the power of all kinds of spirits, demons, and supernatural powers to influence his destiny is due largely to his inability to grasp the essence and connection of things, or to his lack of knowledge of what we call natural laws.

To modern civilized man, existence is seen as a complex whole, the parts of which stand in continual relation to one another according to immutable laws. Nothing takes place here that cannot be accounted for by other similar processes of nature. The scientific theory of causation always explains nature by herself, not by anything standing outside her. Such a conception, however, is possible only where a higher intellectual stage is reached. It presupposes a developed power of thinking, the faculty of abstraction and generalization, and of forming concepts and judgments. Only by the mental act which subsumes the various elements of perception under generic concepts do the former become clearly fixed and classified, every experience becomes formalized and objectivated; in short, it is only by such a mental act that existence appears intelligible to us.

Owing to his less developed mind, the savage must necessarily have a different view of things and phenomena in the world. Thus his ideas in general, his ideas of spiritual beings, for instance, seem to have a vague and indistinct character. For an undeveloped mind it is equally difficult to form a clear and definite conception of the concrete and individual as of the typical and general. Psychologists have rightly shown that peoples of low culture possess only to a limited extent the power of abstraction and generalization. This would seem to be so, for instance, from the fact that many primitive tribes have special words only for the first numerals. Many of them are said to be unable to count higher than five, denoting all higher numerals simply by a word which means "many". This is the case, for example, with the Jibaro Indians of Western Amazonas, although they are by no means among the most primitive South American tribes. A Jibaro Indian, moreover, cannot indicate a number in the abstract, but invariably counts with the aid of his fingers or his toes and always begins from "one". The same is told of many other uncultured peoples, and no doubt must be explained by their lack of the power of abstraction. On the whole, words for abstract concepts are rare or entirely lacking in the languages of primitive peoples. To refer the particular to something general is very difficult for them; to deduce a general rule with permanent validity from what they have observed in individual cases does not occur to them.

This mental peculiarity, of course, is not in contradiction with what I have just stated about the tendency to generalize rashly about single experiences. It is precisely this tendency which is opposed to methodical scientific thought. It is because he lacks power to form generic concepts that the laws of nature are quite unknown to the savage, as, too, on the whole, is the notion of necessity. The consequence is that, in many cases, the natural connection between things and events in the world is not realized by him. These are not viewed with regard to the relations to other similar events nor referred to their natural causes. Much of what happens around him appears to him merely as the result of chance or, more properly speaking, of the capricious will of invisible supernatural agents.

Although I am well aware of the difficulty of making general statements, more so because so-called primitive peoples repre-

sent somewhat different stages of intellectual development, I think that the above are psychological traits which, with small variations, may be said to be common to all lower races of mankind.

That this is so is shown above all by the relative uniformity of their animistic beliefs. There is no doubt that the "superstitions" of the savage arise largely from his being incapable of deeper thought. Nothing is more likely, in fact, to excite superstitious fear in a primitive mind than the inability to form clear conceptions about things perceived. A horse in the dusk shies at the threatening form of a tree-stump beside the road, although in daylight he would not notice it at all. In his imagination it becomes a strange living being with power perhaps to injure him; the instinct of self-preservation, therefore, prompts him to be on his guard against the unknown. For the same reason, the savage fears everything strange and mysterious in nature. Everything that exceeds his capability to understand and which strikes his imagination, such as the deep forest and dense jungle where the wanderer loses his way, the high mountain with its peculiarly shaped rocks and dark abysses, the gloomy cave, the old hollow tree, rare and dangerous animals, strange natural phenomena such as thunder, lightning, and volcanic eruptions—all these things and phenomena awaken in him a sense of something supernatural and divine. To these he soon begins to give a more or less concrete form.

It is the sentiment that is the primary trait of religion. The ideas form rather a secondary element of it. From this point of view we may find unsatisfactory Tylor's definition of religion as being simply a belief in spiritual beings. It lays too much emphasis upon the intellectual side of religion, disregarding the emotional side. The sense of the Supernatural can be traced even in the higher animals, as may be inferred from the instance just mentioned. The fear and awe which domestic animals display during thunderstorms or earthquakes is evidently closely akin to religious sentiment as it appears in man.

The sense of awe in such animals is associated with another feature in their psychical life which they have in common with primitive peoples, namely, the tendency to personify inanimate things. Darwin, who was the first to assert boldly

that, in regard to mental and moral faculties, there was no fundamental distinction between animals and man, mentions an instance in his *Descent of Man* illustrating this tendency as well as the sense of the Supernatural, with reference to his own dog. The dog, an old and intelligent animal, was lying upon the lawn on a windless day; at a little distance a slight breeze occasionally stirred an open parasol which would have been wholly disregarded by the dog had anyone stood near it. As it was, every time the parasol slightly moved the dog growled fiercely and barked. He must, Darwin adds, have reasoned to himself in a rapid and unconscious manner that movement without any apparent cause indicated the presence of some strange living agent. [4] Similar instances are given by Professor Romanes. He explains the strange behaviour of the animals in these cases by the sense of the mysterious displayed by the more intelligent among them. [5]

If sentiment is the primary element in religion, then clearly to every sentiment there are always attached ideas, however vague, of the thing which awakens it. Primitive man's propensity to deify the phenomena of nature would be difficult to comprehend without understanding the very propensity just hinted at, and existing, to a certain extent, even in the higher animals, namely, unconsciously to obliterate the boundary drawn by civilized man between the organic and the inorganic, between animate and inanimate nature, and to endow even the latter with life. The savage necessarily projects upon the objects and phenomena of the external world the innate and intrinsic consciousness of himself as a living subject, active, exercising a will of his own, capable of emotions and passions, thus transforming them into living deliberate subjects. Primarily, of course, the savage animates such objects as, being capable of motion, and as possessing the most important characteristic of force, activity, and life; hence the principle that "everything that moves possesses life".

But motionless inanimate things are also frequently vivified in the same way. Even this view is not difficult to explain psychologically. We must not forget that the idea of inanimate matter, if grasped by a primitive mind at all, does not play any part in the consciousness of uncultured man. His knowledge is limited to the living, moving, sentient world around him, other living beings with whom he enters into relations and

has most dealings. Consequently, when his attention is aroused by the perception of a striking object the idea occurs to him quite simply that this may be some living yet strange being. Moreover, the very mental activity implied by the "movement of attention" may, in some cases, explain this notion. When the attention is directed towards the appearance of something new, the perceiving subject receives from it a number of impressions which more or less change the ideas then present in his consciousness. Hence, when a strange and unfamiliar object is brought suddenly within the field of consciousness, there arises easily in an undeveloped mind the illusion of activity on the part of the thing perceived. This consequently becomes vivified. [6] The more, of course, the object in question resembles some living being already familiar to the perceiving mind, the more easily, by virtue of the law of association, is the illusion felt.

Many errors to which uncultured man is prone in his daily life arise from this view of the natural objects around him. A savage who falls over a stone and hurts himself ascribes this accident, for instance, to the action of the stone, which, consequently, is looked upon by him as a living agent. When, in a higher culture, we sometimes observe children and un-educated people get angry with and beat inanimate things which have caused them pain or displeasure in some way, this may not perhaps be directly explained as a survival from a savage state, but it is an expression anyhow of an inherent primitive tendency of the kind indicated.

Starting from psychological facts of this kind, some modern scientists have tried to find, in the religions of the lower peoples, traces of a still earlier stage of religious thought than the one represented by the belief in spirits, namely, of a *pre-animistic* stage. By no means can it be taken for granted, it has been argued, that the savage, when he deifies the objects of nature, really believes that they are animated by a "soul" or "spirit". The "deification" may only imply that he simply imagines the object in question to be living and endowed with power, an idea associated with the usual feeling of wonder and awe awakened by the unknown and mysterious. The stone worshipped is not thought to be the seat of a spirit or soul, but merely a living agent endowed with power. The old tree, revered as a sacred object, is not necessarily regarded

by its worshippers as being animated in the strict sense of the word, but is conceived simply as a living being, water in the same way only as a living element, and so forth. This supposed pre-animistic conception has been denoted by the word *animatism* (from *animatus*, living). Children, too, it has been said, are animatists without being animists. The child beats the stove on which it has burnt itself or the chair on which it has hurt itself, just as if they were living conscious agents. In the same way, it has been argued, primitive peoples conceived the objects of nature as living beings in analogy with man himself, endowed with will and power, before they began to apply to them animistic interpretations.

One may almost say that, as far as the beliefs of the lower races are concerned, it is the idea of impersonal, non-animistic "power" which has dominated the science of religion during the last decades. It is true that in most cases scientists in this field have adopted the "pre-animistic theory" without founding their opinion on independent investigations.

The theory, however, includes two fundamental notions which have frequently been confounded although they should really be held apart. One is that already touched on and denoted by the name "animatism". The other is that which refers to the idea of "power" in the strict sense, and for which a typical expression has been found in the *mana* of the Melanesians, the word they use for the Supernatural. Dr. R. R. Marett of Oxford was one of the first to set forth this new theory in his *Threshold of Religion*, in 1909. In this work both the conception termed "animatism" and the conception of *mana* are explained in detail.

The word *mana* and the fundamental religious notion to which it has reference were made known to the scientific world by the writings of the English missionary Codrington. In a letter to Max Müller, as early as in 1878, Codrington had touched upon this primitive idea of the Supernatural characteristic of the Melanesians and of other peoples of Oceania, but in 1891, in his great work *The Melanesians*, he expounded in detail, and illustrated with numerous instances, the Melanesian belief in "a supernatural power or a supernatural influence". It affects everything which is beyond the ordinary power of men and outside the common processes of nature; it is present in the atmosphere of life, and attaches

itself to persons and things. A conspicuous success is a proof that a person has *mana*, and certain forms of words are considered to have the same power for certain purposes. A stone resembles a fruit. It is not like an ordinary stone, there is certainly *mana* in it. It is laid at the root of a tree the fruit of which resembles the stone. If the tree bear abundant fruits, the thing is clear. The stone may also communicate *mana* to other stones, and so forth. [7]

*Mana*, like the kindred Polynesian word *tabu*, has been transformed into a term of world-wide application, and research workers in the field of comparative religion have, in the last decades, been eagerly seeking equivalents to it among other peoples, both lower and higher. Analogous expressions, for instance, are supposed to be the *kalou* of the Fijians, the *tendi* of the Bataks, the *manitu* of the Algonquin Indians, the *orenda* of the Iroquois, the *huaca* of the ancient Peruvians. In ancient Scandinavian religion a typical expression for the idea of supernatural power has been found in the word *hamingja*. To complete the collection of terms which appear to have a similar meaning, I add the Finno-Ugrian *väki*, by which the ancient Finns denoted an impersonal power, present everywhere in nature, and *nena* (literally: "nose", "anger"), the particular power or influence of the forest and the water. [8]

How easy it is in reality to find words of this kind in different religions may be judged from the fact that it is now the custom to interpret any native word for "fetish", "amulet", or "magical medicine" as an expression of the "pre-animistic" supernatural power. We find this, for example, if we read those chapters in the work of the Swedish archbishop N. Söderblom on the origin of the belief in God which deal with *mana* and kindred ideas. This author includes even the Indian *brahman* and the *varenah* of the Avesta in the same category of fundamental religious ideas. Even these words, therefore, are, or at any rate were, originally nothing but general expressions for the Supernatural, the impersonal divine Power, which according to the hypothesis has nothing to do with later ideas of souls or spirits. [9]

Independently of Dr. Marett, and with still more emphasis, the well-known ethnologist, K. T. Preuss, has set forth the theory of pre-animism, and is, perhaps, at present its best-known advocate. In a series of articles, published in

the years 1905 and 1906 in the *Globus*, on the origin of religion and art, Preuss tried to show that among many primitive peoples, particularly among several tribes of Central and South America, there occur a great many magical and religious rites which are quite independent of animism and have no connection whatever with the belief in spirits. In these rites it is only a question of an impersonal magical power (*Zauberkraft*) which is present in things and inanimate objects, as in plants, animals, and men. [10]

The fact that Preuss has not notably changed his view since the articles just mentioned were published appears from his more recent little book on the Supreme Beings and the mystic beliefs of the lower peoples, of 1926. In this book Preuss expounds his pre-animistic theory in detail and the primitive religious view of the world, as he understands it. [11] Taken as a whole, his pre-animistic "Zaubertheorie" reminds one to a certain extent of Frazer's well-known theory, as set forth in *The Golden Bough*, according to which, in the evolution of the ideas of the Supernatural, magic preceded religion conceived as a belief in spirits.

As with similar other theories of modern comparative sociology and the science of religion, so with "pre-animism". Having once gained the approval of a few scientists looked upon as authoritative in questions of primitive religion, it has been accepted uncritically by one student of religion after the other. Just as some thirty years ago totemism was regarded as the original form of religion and anthropologists were eagerly seeking "traces of totemism" in the religions of all lower peoples, so many scientists believe to-day that in the Melanesian *mana* they have found the solution to some of the most important problems of primitive religion. In fact, together with "totemism" and "monotheism", *mana* is probably the most misused term in the modern science of religion. In fact the theory of pre-animism has been set forth by some modern students of religion not only as an hypothesis, but almost as a demonstrated truth.

Adopting a critical attitude we find, however, that the theory is nothing but a construction, unproved up to date and, as far as I can see, unprovable. It is a pure construction, for instance, when Mr. Clodd, following certain other pre-animists, interprets the Melanesian *mana* as "that very living

stuff out of which demons, gods, and souls have slowly gathered shape", stating subsequently that this "Naturism" or belief in impersonal powers is prior to animism or the belief in personal spirits. [12] Nowhere in Codrington's work do I find any support for this interpretation, and still less are we entitled to generalize on such a view. If, for instance, an ethnologist like Jochelson has really been able to state that the supreme being of the Koryaks is nothing but "the personification of the vital principle in nature taken in its entirety"—which, however, I take to be only his own subjective view—we should be on our guard against assuming this to be the character of the supreme beings everywhere, or the "naturism" hinted at to be the expression of a world-wide primitive view. In my own field of research, South America, at any rate I have not found any "naturism" of this kind. I think, moreover, that it is hardly compatible with the psychology of primitive man.

In our own day no primitive people is known to exist which is not familiar with the idea of a soul. Prehistoric archaeology showed that the same must have been the case with palaeolithic man in Europe. When Professor Preuss states that the Cora Indians of Mexico have no word for "soul" and that their whole mythology of nature has been developed without any connection with their animism, we may wonder whether, in making this statement, Preuss has not been influenced by his own theories. In any case, the fact that a people lacks a word for "soul" does not necessarily prove that the corresponding notion is unknown to it. Everywhere, both in North and in South America, animism appears to form the very basis of the religion of the Indians. If, as well as the belief in a soul, we find among certain peoples the idea of an impersonal magical power, it is at best an open question how both these fundamental beliefs are related and which of them is older.

As far as "animatism" is concerned, I have already shown that, in the primitive savage, as well as in the higher animals, we may observe a tendency to endow even inanimate nature with a life similar to that in himself and his equals. I believe we may ultimately assume a tendency of this kind behind that animistic philosophy which sees in a tree, a stick, and a stone an indwelling spiritual being or soul; it may have co-operated with other tendencies of thought in the formation of his primitive belief in the spirits of nature and gods.

Theoretically, of course, we are at liberty to assume that there was a time in the mental evolution of man when he was still at an "animatistic" stage in his conception of the supernatural, but, in the absence of any evidence, such a hypothesis is of little worth. The main question at the moment is: Are there any primitive peoples of the present day, whose conceptions of the Supernatural can be shown to be "animatistic" in the sense given to this word by Dr. Marett, but *not* animistic in the Tylorian sense? Dr. Marett holds this to be the case; holds, moreover, that it can be shown "conclusively" that, in some cases, "animistic interpretations have been superimposed on what previously bore a non-animistic sense." [13]

It is just this thesis that I am compelled to contradict. I believe it is easy to show that the facts which Dr. Marett interprets as being in support of his theory are equally open to other interpretations. This is unfortunate because of the great influence they have had on modern students of primitive religion. The ideas savages have about the "Divine" in nature is not exhausted by the vague personification of which Dr. Marett speaks. The analogous notion of children, who are "animatists without being at the same time animists", [14] does not help us in the least. It would obviously be a great mistake to draw conclusions from the psychology of children as to the manner of thought characteristic of primitive man. They may perhaps have certain mental traits in common, but on the whole the savage, neither in thought nor actions, can be compared with a child. Within the realm of religion alone the essential difference between them appears in the very fact, that all savage peoples whom we know, have developed a real belief in spirits and gods which is lacking in the case of children.

If we subject primitive ideas of the Supernatural to a close investigation, we usually find they are much more concrete than a superficial observer is inclined to believe. It is easy to show, for example, that in all those cases in which, according to Dr. Marett, we have instances of an "animatistic" notion, we have in reality animism pure and simple. In his interpretation of them Dr. Marett is obviously being influenced by his preconceived opinion about "rudimentary" religion. The sources Dr. Marett uses in trying to prove his hypothesis

are in most cases very doubtful, and his knowledge of the ethnological literature in general seems to be rather limited. Some of his instances may be analysed here.

Among other things Dr. Marett points out that such phenomena, for example, as thunderstorms, eclipses, eruptions, and so on, are apt to awake feelings of awe in primitive man and be regarded as manifestations of the "supernatural" or as "powers" in a general sense, without necessarily being set down to the operation of spirits. "Thus, when a thunder-storm is seen approaching in South Africa, a Kafir village, led by its medicine-man, will rush to the nearest hill and yell at the hurricane to divert it from its course. Here we have awe finding vent in what, on the face of it, may be no more than a simple straightforward act of personification; . . . but it is *not* animism in the strict scientific sense that implies the attribution not merely of personality and will, but of 'soul' or 'spirit', to the storm." [15]

However, the belief that thunderstorms, eclipses, and volcanic eruptions are caused by powerful evil spirits, often conceived directly as disembodied human souls, is probably universal among savage peoples all over the world. In fact, according to Dudley Kidd, one of our best authorities on the Kafirs and other South African tribes, some of the natives believe that thunder is caused by some *old ancestor*, whereas others believe that it is caused by *hostile spirits*. "The natives of Zululand," the same author tells us, "believe that if one examines the spot where lightning struck the ground, the shaft of an *assagai* will be found. The lightning is thus thought to be some dazzling spear hurled through the air." The Kafirs, therefore, "sometimes place *assagais* through the roof when the storm begins, thinking that these will ward off the lightning." [16]

With this purely animistic belief of the Kafirs we may compare the idea of the Jibaros known to me from personal observation. They believe that, during thunderstorms, spirits of departed Jibaro warriors are running through the air, their custom being on such occasions to shout loudly and brandish their lances against the clouds to frighten away the supernatural enemies. [17] Here we have a remarkable uniformity of beliefs between peoples in different parts of the world who cannot be assumed to have influenced each other. It would

be easy to add similar instances from other quarters of the globe. It is strange that, in support of his pre-animistic theory, Dr. Marett should have adduced one of the most typical instances of animism afforded by the religion of the lower peoples.

Another of Dr. Marett's instances refers to the South American Indians. "The Fuegians," we are told by Admiral Fitzroy, "abstain from killing young ducks on the ground that if they do, 'Rain come down, snow come down, hail come down, wind blow, blow, very much blow.' The storm is sent by a 'big man' who lives in the woods." [18] Now it must be remarked, first and foremost, that Admiral Fitzroy is a very doubtful authority on the Fuegians and that his statements about their religious ideas can only be accepted as far as they are confirmed by other observers. That the "big man of the woods" of whom Fitzroy speaks should be a sort of "supreme being" in whom the killing of young ducks awakens moral indignation with subsequent chastisement of the guilty ones, as interpreted by Andrew Lang, is out of the question. But I am just as little able to find in this instance any case of animatism as understood by Dr. Marett.

Fortunately there are other sources which tell us enough about Fitzroy's "big man" to enable us to establish his real character. Thus Bove relates that the Jahgans, among other things, believe in a "devil", called Curspic, who at times punishes them "for their indifference" by sending them winds, hail, and snow. The rainbow is regarded as a sign of his anger and is therefore the object of magic rites. This statement is confirmed by the companion of Bove, the geologist D. Lovisato. [19] It is evident that Bove's Curspic or "devil" is identical with Fitzroy's "big man". As to this Curspic we again get information from no less authority than Thomas Bridges, the English missionary who lived among the Jahgans for forty years. According to his explanation of the etymology of the word Curspic (*cujpik, kachpikh*) it is not a proper noun at all but the general word of the Jahgans for "spirit," more strictly speaking "evil spirit". "Their evil nature", says Bridges, "is a belief so wide-spread, that the word *kachpikh* is applied to every person who has a bizarre and evil character." [20] It is quite natural that such a demon is believed to torment the natives with snow and hail, and rains. I may

add that among the Chaco Indians, who are related culturally to the Fuegians, the cold south wind which, even in the Chaco, sometimes brings with it hail and ice, is universally ascribed to the action of evil spirits, as are also the rainbow and other striking meteoric phenomena.

In short, if we have not once again pure animism in the instance mentioned by Dr. Marett in regard to the Fuegians, I confess that I do not know what is meant by this word. Here again Dr. Marett's misinterpretation has been possible only by his using a source of secondary importance, whereas he has ignored those authorities who could have thrown light on the question.

Dr. Marett's other instances of "animatism" are still more insignificant and are regarded even by himself as dubious. One of his "cases" may still be dealt with because it touches on a question of particular interest. I refer to his interpretation of the savage theory of disease, or more strictly speaking, that kind of disease ascribed to witchcraft. Dr. Marett's opinion is that animism is not primarily, but only secondarily connected with the religious Awe in the presence of this kind of disease. "There is a large and miscellaneous number of diseases," he says, "that primitive man attributes to witchcraft, without at the same time necessarily ascribing them to the visitation of bad spirits. Thus a savage will imagine that he has a crab or a frog, some red ants or a piece of crystal, in his stomach, introduced by magical means. . . . To remedy such supposed evils the native doctor betakes himself to the sucking cure and the like, whilst he meets spirits with a more or less distinct set of contrivances, for instance the drum or rattle to frighten them, and the hollow bone to imprison them." [21]

Again this exposition is clearly contradicted by the beliefs actually held by the lower peoples. That Dr. Marett's "pre-animistic" explanation of primitive witchcraft is erroneous, I have myself shown with particular reference to the South American Indians. [22] Both my investigations and those of other ethnologists have made it quite clear that the Indian theory of witchcraft is animistic throughout. Both among the tribes of Western Amazonas and among the Chaco Indians, for instance, the sorcerers always operate in alliance with evil demons when they throw their spells to harm other people; the "arrow", although in itself a material object, is always

regarded as the embodiment of an evil spirit who penetrates into the body and causes the pains. In the same way, the medicine-men, when trying to cure evils inflicted by other wizards, are invariably assisted by certain spirits over whom they have acquired influence. The same theory of witchcraft was found by the German ethnologist Koch-Grünberg among the Indians of Guiana. [23] Likewise Mr. Bar Brooke Grubb tells us of the Lengua wizards in the Chaco, that "when they desire to afflict their victims with the presence in their bodies of such things as beetles, fish-bones, etc., they can only do so through the aid of the *kilyikhama* (evil spirits)." [24] We can establish the same, for instance, with regard to the shamanistic practices of the Asiatic peoples, the witchcraft practised by the Malays of Indonesia, by various peoples of Africa, and so forth.

In short, Dr. Marett has not been able to describe a primitive religious view which is wholly independent of animism. Are there any other ethnological facts that may possibly be interpreted as instances of "animatism"?

"Everything lives," says a Chuckchee shaman. "The lamp wanders about. The walls of the hut has its voices; the skins that sleep in the bags speak in the evenings; the reindeer-horns that lie on the graves, get up at night and wander about on the burial-place." The quotation is taken from a work on the shamanism in Northern Asia, [25] and the author adds that, in this case, the very objects of nature are conceived as independent living and acting beings. The case might therefore be interpreted as animatism and not as animism.

This conclusion, however, would evidently be premature. From the statements of the same author and from those of other authors on the Siberian tribes, it is most clearly seen that their shamanism is based wholly on animistic ideas. When by means of his drum and other devices the shaman has fallen into a state of ecstasy, he enters into communication with the spirits who fill him with supernatural power and knowledge. It is on these occasions in particular that the whole of nature seems to him to be animated. Of the Chuckchees we are expressly told that, according to their belief, the spirits not only appear in the shape of different animals, but also in the shape of utensils, implements, and other inanimate things. What the shaman told of the skins that "sleep in the bags

and speak at night" or the reindeer-horns that "wander about on the burial-places" probably refers to the spirits animating these objects. The idea that the soul or vital power of an animal is particularly concentrated in such parts of the body as the skin, horns, claws, and teeth, is almost universal in primitive culture. In any case, from general statements such as the one just quoted, evidently not based on close inquiry into the matter, no decisive conclusions can be drawn.

We are told of the Syrjanes, a Finno-Ugrian people in Northern Russia, that, when they move to a strange tract of land, they are in the habit of washing the face and the hands in the river flowing by the new dwelling-place, in order that the "anger" (*nenä*) of the water may not stick to them. [26] Similarly the Samoyedes wash themselves every time that they arrive at a new river during a boating excursion. "The water has life," says the Tsheremiss, "it streams from one place to the other, serves man and propels his boat." [27]

We might be inclined to assume in these cases that the water is conceived simply as a living element endowed with power, and that there does not enter any idea of a soul at all. This would be a mistake. The idea of an impersonal magical power inherent in the water is quite common among peoples who believe in souls or spirits animating the water. It can be shown, moreover, that the "power" which the water is believed to possess is due precisely to the water spirit.

Thus among the Finno-Ugrian peoples the belief in water spirits is quite common. The Tsheremisses, for instance, attribute to water a "free-soul", called *ōrt*. When the soul of the water disappears, the water gets "sick", it becomes muddy and smells. If man drinks "sick" water, he will fall ill. The soul of the water becomes a fairy of the river or lake, who at the same time is closely associated with the material water. If the fairy disappears, the water will run dry. Whither the spirit of the water moves, thither the water is assembled, and so forth. At times, the "soul" or tutelary spirit of the water may also assume a visible shape. [28] Many instances of the same kind could be mentioned, but I shall have an opportunity to deal again with these questions in connection with the spirits of inanimate nature.

In short, it seems to me very doubtful whether any primitive view exists which may be termed "animatism"; as far as this

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word implies a religious view is wholly independent of animism. In South America, where I subjected the ideas of the Indians to a detailed analysis, I could not find anything but animism pure and simple. The same seems to be true of the religious ideas found among primitive natives in other parts of the world. The theory of "animatism", as defined by Dr. Marett, can hardly be supported except by the "incomplete observations" of superficial travellers. As far as I can see, the whole word should be discarded as a term in the science of religion.

The "power", on the other hand, no doubt exists, but the place to be assigned to it in the evolution of religion, is not the one suggested by the pre-animists. Professor Preuss, who appears as the special advocate of the theory of pre-animistic "power", is no more fortunate in his arguments than Dr. Marett. Even he supports them with a number of facts where the animistic conception is quite obvious. This is so with Preuss's assertion that the curious ceremonies which the medicine-men of the Bororó in the interior of Brazil perform with the slaughtered game before they eat it, are to be explained from their desire to paralyse the impersonal "magical power" emanating from the body and to which the fortunate hunter is above all exposed. [29]

Rites of this kind occur all over the world and they seem to be due invariably to animistic ideas, as has been shown, for instance, by J. G. Frazer: it is considered necessary to propitiate the soul of the slaughtered animal the revenge for which would otherwise turn against the hunter. The ceremonies performed at one time by Finns and the Laplanders after the killing of a bear had thus for their object to propitiate the soul of the bear. It was exactly the same with the Bororó. Of them von den Steinen expressly tells us that, according to their belief, souls of dead *buri* or medicine-men took up their abode in those very animals which were most appreciated as food. [30] It is true that Preuss asserts this to be a "later idea", invented to explain the rite in question, but he adduces no evidence in support of his view.

It is a serious thing when obvious misinterpretations of facts gain ground in ethnology, are approved of by other scientists and referred to as "evidence" for far-reaching theories. In this way false dogmas are easily created which are apt to lead scientists astray. The old dogmas on "primary

monotheism", on "totemism", and so forth, should serve as warnings. It is by no means an uncommon thing to find now in modern literature on primitive religion, statements to the effect that Marett, Preuss, and others have "proved" the existence of a purely animatistic or at least non-animistic view among primitive peoples.

Nor does the theorizing on more or less mystic terms about the religion of different peoples, translated by ethnologists and philologists with such words as "power", "supernatural influence", or the like, help us much. Their interpretation will always depend on the subjective view of the scientist using them. [31] At any rate, it is not possible by such a philological method to solve the problem of the impersonal supernatural power and its relation to the belief in souls and spirits. It is necessary first to analyse carefully the religious phenomena to which these terms refer. This has been little done except in regard to the fundamental term *mana* in Melanesia and the *orenda* of the Iroquois.

As to *mana*, it is important to state, that, according to Codrington himself, this "supernatural power or influence" of the Melanesians always has its origin in a person, a living or a dead one. "This power, though itself impersonal," we are told, "is always connected with some person who directs it: all spirits have it, ghosts generally, some men. If a stone is found to have a supernatural power it is because a spirit has associated itself with it. A dead man's bone has with it *mana*, because the ghost is with the bone; a man may have so close a connection with a spirit or ghost that he has *mana* in himself also, and can so direct it to effect what he desires. All conspicuous success is a proof that a man has *mana*; his influence depends on the impression made on the people's mind that he has it." If a man has been successful in fighting, it is not through his own qualities, but "he has certainly got the *mana* of some deceased warrior to empower him, conveyed in an amulet of a stone round his neck, or a tuft of leaves in his belt, in a tooth hung upon the finger of his bow hand, or in the form of words with which he brings supernatural assistance to his side." [32]

It is difficult to understand how statements as unequivocal as these, could have ever been adduced in support of any pre-animistic theories. Moreover, Codrington's explanation, that

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*mana* is always connected with spirits, ghosts, or men, is confirmed by a more recent student of the Melanesians, Mr. Hocart. He expressly says that *mana* is a permanent attribute of ghosts, spirits, and persons, who thereby respond to prayers and charms. "So far from being pre-animistic," he continues, "the word is out and out spiritualistic: it is almost, if not entirely, confined to the action of ghosts and spirits who, whatever their origin, now go under the same name as the ghosts: *tomate* in Mandegusu, *kalou* in Fiji, *atua* in Wallis Island, *aitu* in Samoa. It would seem that the word is simply a technical term belonging to a spiritualistic doctrine which it is the task of ethnology to reconstruct." [33] Further, when Codrington adds that all departed souls have not *mana* and that those persons who possessed the power in their life-time have it also after death, this by no means conflicts with the view that, wherever *mana* occurs, it is still of animistic origin. The medicine-men, for example, are persons above all with a "strong soul" which enables them to bewitch or cure people. On the other hand, there are persons, especially women and children, whose soul has so little "power" that it is practically non-existent. They may therefore be said to lack *mana*.

When, after lengthy and learned discussions, Söderblom in his work on the origin of the belief in gods, arrives at the result that *mana* and soul cannot be derived from each other, but are quite different things, he does it only on the erroneous assumption, founded to a certain extent in Tylor's definition of animism, that animism always and necessarily means a belief in "personal" spiritual beings and is incompatible with the idea of an impersonal magical power or influence. This, however, is by no means the case. Bearing this in mind, we need not wonder that even the Iroquois or Huron *orenda* turns out to be a power of the spirit or soul and consequently is of animistic origin.

In his article "Orenda and a Definition of Religion", published in the *American Anthropologist*, our most important authority on this mystic religious term, the American Hewitt—himself of Iroquois descent—gave information about the *orenda*, showing that, in meaning, it is very near the conception of *mana*. As in Melanesia *mana*, so among the Iroquois the *orenda* is attributed above all to the medicine-man. "A shaman is one whose *orenda* is great, powerful; a fine hunter is one whose

*orenda* is fine, superior in quality. When a hunter is successful in the chase, it is said, he baffled, thwarted their *orenda*, i.e. the *orenda* of the quarry. . . . A prophet or soothsayer is one who habitually puts forth or effuses his *orenda* and thereby learnt the secrets of the future. . . . Of one who is about to bewitch another male person, it is said he is preparing his *orenda* for or against him. ‘It is an evil *orenda* that struck him’, is said of one who, it is believed, died from being bewitched,” [34] and so forth. There can be no mistake that in all these instances we are dealing simply with that superior *power of the soul*, capable of stimulation by artificial means, which according to primitive view is possessed in particular by the medicine-man but in a greater or lesser degree exists also in ordinary persons. Thus the South American Indians have precisely the same idea as the Iroquois and Hurons, although they generally have no special word to denote this mysterious spiritual power of the wizards and medicine-men.

A more ambiguous term is perhaps the Algonquian *manitowi*. In many cases, it seems to be used in the same sense as the Huron *orenda*, denoting an impersonal magical power; in other cases, if we may trust our literary sources, it is used to denote mythical beings and spirits, or even the highest god or divinity. On a term used in so many different senses, it is safest not to build any definite theory as to the original conception of the Supernatural. [35]

A few words may be added as to the Finnish *väki*, mentioned above. In primitive Finnish religion the word undoubtedly signified, among other things, a supernatural “power”, but its origin, as Professor K. Krohn has clearly shown, is purely animistic. *Väki* in the Finnish language means “men”, “people”, as well as “power”, which meanings the word already had in primitive times. Thus the ancient Finns spoke about “the people of the burial-place” (*kalmanväki*), meaning thereby *the spirits of the dead* who were believed to lead their own life on the place where the corpses had been buried. The word *väki* referred both to this “people” and to the supernatural power proceeding from them. The sorcerers were able to compel the *väki* of the burial-places to enter into their service, and at the same time took possession of their “power”. This happened by the sorcerer procuring a small quantity of mould proceeding from the body interred. The mould had to be

taken from a grave where a person who had died of a real disease had been buried, for only the corpse of such a person contained *väki*. Likewise, according to ancient Finnish belief, the *väki* of the wood and of the water derived its power from the spirits of the dead who inhabited the wood and the water. [36]

It is remarkable that those students of religion who accepted the theory of pre-animism, should never have thought it necessary to take into account the cultural stage occupied by the different peoples among whom the idea of a "supernatural power" appears in a more or less characteristic form. As I have already stated, no primitive people exists who, in its practical religion, would deal exclusively with impersonal "powers", completely ignoring spirits or demons. To be able to prove that the idea of supernatural power represents a primitive notion even in a relative sense, it would be necessary at any rate to show that, among peoples standing at the lowest stages of intellectual and cultural development, impersonal "powers" play a more important part than spirits and demons, and that at higher stages this "naturism"—to use Mr. Clodd's expression—is disappearing, giving way to real animism. Far from being the case, however, the very reverse can be proved to hold true. Impersonal powers, with apparently no connection with the belief in spirits, appear in their most characteristic form among half-civilized peoples, whereas among peoples standing somewhat higher in culture, such as Melanesians and Polynesians, Iroquois and Algonquins, the connection between the power and the soul is still, as a rule, quite conspicuous. On the other hand, tribes who, as far as we can judge, stand lowest in the scale of cultural development, show so strong a tendency to personify the objects of religious belief, that "powers" hardly exist at all, except, as with the power called *tabu*, in immediate connection with a spirit or soul from which it proceeds.

Speaking of the religion of the South American Indians, Dr. Westermarck remarks incidentally, "It is interesting to find that the notion of impersonal energy seems to be much less conspicuous and the tendency to personify the cause of wonder greater, among the South American Indians than among the much more civilized natives of Morocco. Facts of this kind may be worth considering in the discussions on animism and pre-animism, and on the priority of magic or religion." [37] As a

matter of fact, it is precisely such half-civilized peoples as the natives of Morocco, also purely Semitic peoples, and again Indians and Iranians, Greeks, and Romans, who afford the most characteristic instances of the idea of supernatural power or influence.

We can study it best in connection with such notions as those of "evil" and sickness, sin, blessing, and curse. In Morocco, for instance, the curse is regarded as a harmful magical substance, a sort of miasma, which destroys or harms the person upon whom it falls. In the Old Testament, for example, those forms of curses which are called *aláh* and *kelálah* seem to be conceived in this way; in other words, as independent magical energies acting mechanically, as also the blessing *berakhah*. [38] Hence the blessing which Isaac erroneously gave to his son Jacob in consequence of his fraud, could not be withdrawn even after the fraud had been discovered and automatically produced its effects. According to Plato, the curse of a father or a mother corrupted everything with which it came in contact. Severe punishment therefore was prescribed for anybody who assaulted his father. Similarly the Romans ascribed such efficacy to certain dreadful curses that, according to their belief, those persons on whom they fell would never escape their effects.

Closely related to the notion of blessing and curse as magical energies is the materialistic conception of sin and disease. The conception of sin and of sickness as purely material powers or substances which can be transmitted mechanically from one person to another or be loaded on a scapegoat, is common among half-civilized peoples such as those just mentioned. In Morocco, for instance, sickness is transmitted to a tree by tying a rag to it. [39] Superstitious practices of this kind are met with throughout the whole world. Their existence as survivals, even among civilized peoples, shows the tenacity with which ideas of this kind are maintained even at higher stages of culture. In distant places in Northern Europe it is still customary to cure toothache by picking the aching tooth with a small stick and afterwards driving the stick into a tree. In this way, it is believed, "sickness" is transmitted to the tree. [40]

In fact, modern popular belief affords the most characteristic instances of an abstract supernatural power or influence which, as far as we can now judge, has little or nothing to do with the belief in spirits. As with "sickness", so with the curse—for instance

the conditional self curse at taking an oath—is often regarded by common people as a harmful purely material substance, charged with supernatural energy, against which it is possible to protect oneself by certain precautionary measures. According to a popular belief prevailing in Ostrobotnia in Northern Finland, one may annihilate a hunter's precision of aim by invoking the devil immediately after the shot is heard in the forest and saying: " May you shoot the Devil with your gun." If, however, the hunter should happen to hold the hand against the mouth of his gun when the curse is pronounced, it will remain ineffective. [41] The fertility of the fields, just as the faculty of the cows to produce milk, is also personified into abstract " powers " which can be transmitted by material means from one place to the other. According to a popular belief, formerly prevailing among the Swedes of Finland, good luck in milking is secured by dragging a sheet along the neighbour's meadow on the Midsummer Eve, until it becomes wet with dew. Then the water is wrung out of the sheet into the milking-pail and some more water added, whereupon the cows, in their appointed turn, are allowed to drink from the pail. In this way the " milk-luck " is stolen from the neighbour. [42] Numerous other instances of the same kind could be quoted, but the above may suffice.

Curiously enough, some students have contended that in practices of this kind, surviving in part in the midst of higher civilization, we have survivals of really " primitive " ideas; in fact, they have even been adduced as evidences of a pre-animistic view. Thus Professor M. P. N. Nilsson, in a work on primitive religion, makes the following statement as to the ideas of sickness and death prevailing among uncultured peoples: " Death is one of the dangerous supernatural powers; . . . hence the dead person is dangerous and tabooed. It is the same with the sick person. . . . Often, however, attempts are made to remove the sickness-producing power. It is conceived as materially as when somebody eats the heart of a lion in order to become strong and brave: the sick one is washed and rubbed with mud and the like, or emetics are given him. The water or the mud is believed to contain the stuff of sickness; it is therefore removed, thrown into the sea, buried or destroyed, and thus the power producing disease is thoroughly made away with." [43]

A notion like this, implying that sickness is simply a kind of impersonal material power or substance, is by no means char-

acteristic, however, of "primitive" peoples. On the contrary, it belongs most clearly to an advanced stage of culture. The power, originally springing from a "personal" spirit or soul, is, as it were, detached from its natural substratum and hypostasized into an independent and more or less material thing. Peoples occupying the lowest stages of culture have an entirely different theory of disease. According to their idea, all illnesses and sufferings are caused by evil spirits or demons which in one way or another have penetrated into the body. On the whole, I think we can make no greater mistake than to take the abstractions of modern popular belief—its ideas of supernatural powers and the like—to be genuine expressions of a really primitive mode of thought.

The eminent German psychologist W. Wundt has rightly observed, as an argument against pre-animism, that it makes the evolution of thought proceed from abstract to concrete, whereas its real course must have been the very reverse. [44] It seems difficult to me to render this objection invalid. A theory which would make religion begin with a belief in impersonal magical powers and explain, for instance, *mana* as "that very living stuff out of which demons, gods, and souls have slowly gathered shape", is founded on a psychological impossibility: it overlooks that strong and constant tendency to *personify* the object of the religious awe and reverence which is characteristic of primitive man. The savage does not try, with his magical conjurations or other simple rites, to influence any "living stuff" or a supernatural energy or influence, but spiritual beings which are vaguely endowed with human will and appetites and super-human power. This point of view seems to me to be decisive when we have ultimately to estimate the "pre-animistic theory".

Still more clearly than was the case at the time when Tylor wrote his *Primitive Culture* has modern ethnology shown the enormous importance of animism in primitive religion. Almost any ethnological work, which treats of religion of uncultured peoples, bears witness to this. Again, pre-animism, in spite of the confusion it has brought about in the conceptions, has had this for consequence, that the ideas the lower peoples entertain about the Supernatural, have been made the object of more detailed studies. The term "animism" must evidently now be taken in a somewhat broader sense than the one in which it was

taken by Tylor. Above all, the question is: What is the relation of animism to magic? Even from some of the facts already adduced it was seen that the idea of an impersonal supernatural power or influence was in many cases secondary, in fact, to the idea of a soul. This question, however, cannot be successfully dealt with until we have examined more closely the conception of soul. This will be my task in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### PRIMITIVE CONCEPTION OF THE SOUL

TYLOR'S well-known definition of the soul runs as follows: "It is a thin, unsubstantial human image, in its nature a sort of vapour, film, or shadow; the cause of life and thought in the individual it animates; independently possessing the personal consciousness and volition of its corporeal owner, past or present; capable of leaving the body far behind to flash swiftly from place to place; mostly impalpable and invisible, yet also manifesting physical power, and especially appearing to men waking or asleep as a phantasm separate from the body of which it bears the likeness; able to enter into, possess or act in the bodies of other men, of animals, and even of things." [1]

This definition of Tylor's may be completed by another which has special reference to the ideas of certain natives of the Malay Archipelago. Referring to the religious ideas of these Malay tribes, the Dutch missionary Warneck states among other things: "To the animist the soul is something entirely different from what we understand it to be. It is an elixir of life, a life stuff, which is found everywhere in nature. Man has two souls, one of which, the bodily soul, pertains to him during his life-time. The other soul, the shadow soul, emerges only when the man dies. The soul of the living man is conceived of as a kind of life-stuff, indestructible and animating alternately this man or that. Among peoples of lower grade the soul-stuff is conceived impersonally, as a vital power which, at the death of its present possessor, passes over to something else, man, animal, or plant. Higher developed peoples conceive the soul as a refined body, to some extent an *alter-ego*, a kind of man within the man. . . . But it is so independent and incalculable a thing that it may at any moment leave him for a longer or shorter period, as for example in dreams, when it is frightened, or when it thinks itself insulted. The well-being of the man depends upon its moods. It can

be nourished, strengthened, and augmented; it can also be weakened, diminished, and enticed away. . . . The soul pervades the whole body, all the members of which are sharers in the soul-stuff. . . . In man and beast this soul-stuff is found especially abundant in the head. . . . Head-hunting has its root in this idea. The vital power and courage of the dead man is appropriated by him who possesses his skull. Medicine and magic are made out of human heads. . . . There is much soul-stuff in the blood, for life ebbs away with the blood. Strength is imparted by drinking the blood of the slain foe. . . .

" Soul-stuff is ascribed to the placenta. There is a mysterious connection between it and the child, its 'elder brother'. The decayed piece of umbilical cord is carefully preserved. The hair also contains much soul power. The sweat also, as a secretion of the body, contains soul-stuff, and as far as it communicates itself to the clothes, these become saturated with soul-stuff. A man's name is closely connected with his soul. It is therefore holy and should not be mentioned except when necessary. No one should utter his own name. . . . The soul does not hesitate to leave men if anything displeases it. Hence caution must be used in chastizing children. Give them their own way lest the sensitive little soul leave them and they die. . . . Whilst the soul is represented in soul-stuff, that soul-stuff is also ascribed to animals and plants. Objects which are of value to men are thought to be animated. Soul is ascribed to the hearth, the house, the boat, the hatchet, iron, and many other instruments. The souls of men, animals, plants, and even those of lifeless things invigorate one another. One can augment or invigorate one's own soul-stuff through that of others. The important thing in eating and drinking is not so much the matter of the food as its soul-stuff. No animistic heathen therefore expects the gods or spirits to consume the material of the food which he places before them as an offering, but only its soul-stuff. The flesh of an animal that is eaten produces an effect on man corresponding to the qualities of the animal in question." [2]

I have quoted this statement at length because I think that in Warneck's definition all aspects of the primitive soul are clearly set forth. An American anthropologist, J. W. Chapman, has pointed out that this definition, although, properly speaking,

it refers only to ideas current among the Malays, holds true in all essential details of the ideas of the soul found among certain North American Indians. For my own part I believe that we may generalize still more and say that it expresses a view which, with small variations, is encountered among the lower peoples all over the world. The extent, for instance, to which the South American Indians, whose animistic ideas I have subjected to a detailed study, agree with the Malays in their conception of the soul, will appear, I think, from the facts I shall mention later. As to the Malays, a statement much like Warneck's about their animism has been made by another Dutch missionary and student of religion, A. C. Krujt. The observations of both are confirmed by the eminent ethnologist A. W. Nieuwenhuis. The only reservation he makes to the "peculiar terminology" of these writers is their use of the name "soul-stuff" to what may simply be called "soul". [3] This, however, is due to the fact that the "soul" is conceived by primitive peoples partly as a personal being, partly in a more impersonal way.

It is not easy to include in a definition which aims at worldwide application all the diverse ideas which savage peoples connect with their conception of the soul. Primitive peoples are not accustomed to work out their ideas in a logical way and to bring them into a system. This does not mean, of course, that their thinking is actually "prelogical", but it means that their ideas necessarily must seem to us confused or even contradictory, and in any case difficult to understand.

Thus the "personal" soul may be dissolved incidentally into an impersonal power, without apparently the primitive thinkers themselves being conscious of the transformation. On the one hand, the soul is thought of as a shadow-like image of the body, from which it frees itself in the moment of death. Again, it is believed that something of the soul remains in the dead body, particularly in the bones, just as during a person's lifetime it is thought to be concentrated for instance in a piece of his nail, a lock of his hair, a drop of his blood. When the body is buried, the soul is believed to follow the corpse to the grave or to go to a distant land of the dead, but this does not prevent the savage from fancying at the same time that it enters into an animal, a plant, and so forth. It is possible, however, as I said, that contradictions of this kind are apparent only, and exist for

the civilized observer simply because of his inability to understand the primitive peoples' train of thought.

Wundt has drawn attention to the fact that among the lower peoples the conception of the soul appears in two forms: one soul is that which Wundt calls the *body-soul* (*Körperseele*), by which he means the soul present in different parts of the body or the vital power; the other is the one called *free-soul*, identified with the breath and with the shadow (*Hauchseele, Schattenseele*), and which is more or less independent of the body. [4] The distinction made here by Wundt in regard to the conception of the soul, and which is also implied in Warneck's definition, is of great importance. As we shall find later, magic in some of its most characteristic forms is founded on the idea of a body-soul.

It seems very doubtful to me, however, whether here we are really concerned with two quite different conceptions of the soul distinguishable even chronologically from one another. It is easy to conjecture, of course, as has been done by Wundt, that the "body-soul" represents the "primitive" notion and that the idea of the soul as a shadow has arisen later. But in the absence of any certain evidence we cannot form a reliable theory on the matter. It should be remembered that both conceptions occur among all lower peoples at the present time. The idea of the body-soul, at any rate, did not disappear with the formation of the idea of a breath- or shadow-soul. If we may trust the ethnological sources, there are some higher savage peoples who are able to keep both conceptions of the soul apart to such an extent that they speak of two souls in man, denoted by different names.

Among these are the Malays, who call the mobile breath- or shadow-soul *bruwa*, whereas the soul more intimately connected with the body is called *ton luwa*. Always restless, the *bruwa*-soul for insignificant reasons flies away from the body even during man's life-time, but can be brought back by the sorcerers by suitable means. All feelings of anguish, painful dreams, accidents, and maladies are due to this part of the man's personality occasionally leaving the body. In the moment of death the *bruwa* leaves the body for ever and goes to the realm of the dead, Apu Kesio. The other soul, *ton luwa*, remains intimately connected with the body during the whole life-time. After death this soul also detaches itself from the body, but remains in its

immediate neighbourhood and follows it to the burial-place, where it roams about, often in the shape of an animal. [5]

It seems to me that, in the *ton luwa* of the Malays, we have simply a further development of the idea of a "body-soul". Most other uncultured peoples have no particular name for this kind of soul and hardly distinguish it consciously from the free-soul: hence there is often an apparent contradiction in their conception of the soul. To denote the body-soul some people use a word which some modern writers have erroneously translated with the word "power". This happens, for instance, with what the Malays of Malacca call *sumangat* and the Bataks of Sumatra *tondi* (or *tendi*). These terms do not signify any "power" in a non-animistic sense, but simply the "body-soul" or "soul-stuff". This is seen from the fact that, according to the belief of these natives, *sumangat* and *tendi* inhabits such parts of the body as the pulse, the intestines, the blood, the umbilical cord, the placenta, the hair, the nails, the saliva, the toes, and so forth. [6]

The free-soul, however, is the form which plays the most important rôle in the psychology of the lower peoples, and it is the one particularly named. In most cases it seems to be identified either with the breath or with the shadow, as is testified by language. Ethnology and the history of religion tell of numerous peoples who used the same word for "breath" and for "soul". As instances may be mentioned peoples as widely separated in time and space as the primitive Australians and the Ainu of Japan on the one hand, the ancient Hebrews and different Aryan peoples of Europe and India on the other.

As to the Hebrews, their primitive idea of the soul was denoted by the words *néphesh* and *neshámah*, whereas *ruah* signified a higher conception. The *néphesh* does not, as is erroneously assumed by Tylor and others, mean "breath": by it the Hebrews denoted a soul which according to their idea was present in the *blood*. Originally *néphesh* was thought to be identical with the blood; it was therefore a typical "body-soul", intimately connected with the bodily organism. As long as *néphesh* existed in the body it had life; death was the consequence of the blood-soul leaving the body. Like many other peoples, the Hebrews had observed that life fades away with the blood streaming from the wound. So conceived, the *néphesh* seems on the whole so intimately connected with the body

itself that we may question whether this principle of life could exist at all as a free-soul in the same sense, for instance, as the *psyche* of the Greeks. After death *néphesh* continued to be attached to its bodily frame, following the corpse to the grave. But, in the Old Testament, there appears also another and more advanced conception of *néphesh*, according to which it is not identical with but *has its seat in* the blood. This notion implies that, later, the Hebrews thought of it as a thing which could detach itself from the body and, at least in a relative sense, lead an independent existence. The word *neshimah*, on the other hand, means "breath", particularly when breathed out through the nose. Consequently it was the true "free-soul" of the Hebrews, and more or less an equivalent to the Greek *psyche*. [7]

*Psyche* seems to be an onomatopoeitic word and shows that the soul was conceived by the Greeks in the first place as a breath of air, a thin vapour or film, or a smoke. It was the *psyche* that was breathed out in the last breath of a dying person. [8] The same may be said of the Sanskrit words *atman* (cf. the German *Atem*, "breath") and *prâna*, and the Latin *animus*, *anima*, *spiritus*.

Closely connected with the idea of the soul as a breath is the idea of the shadow-soul. As an aerial being the *psyche* was sometimes compared by the Greeks with a shadow (*skia*); or, it formed a shadow-like image (*eidolon*) of the body to which it once belonged. When the modern savage sees his image reflected on the ground or on the smooth surface of the water, he believes he sees in that image his second-self, his soul. If another person treads on his shadow he treads on his soul, which is regarded by many peoples as a dreadful form of tactlessness.

It is also a well-known fact that many peoples denote the soul by a word meaning, at the same time, shadow. Not only do the Zulus use the word *tunzi* for "shadow, spirit, ghost", but they consider that at death the shadow of a man will in some way or another depart from the corpse, to become an ancestral spirit. [9] The Algonquin Indians describe a man's soul as *otahchuk*, "his shadow". The Arawak word *ueja* means "shadow, soul, image". [10] The word which the Toba Indians use for "soul", *kadepakál*, also means "shadow", and the same holds true of the Jibaro word *wakáni*. But the *wakáni* is also attached to the hair and the head, the nails, the blood, the liver,

etc., and consequently signifies the "body-soul" as well as the "free-soul". Since, to the savage, the soul is identical with any image or likeness of him, primitive peoples generally show a great aversion to being photographed. I found this particular superstition among all the South American tribes I visited. Thus, both the Jibaros and the different Chaco tribes strongly objected at first to being photographed on the ground that "I was taking their souls" with my camera, with the probable consequence that they would soon die. The photographs were called *wakáni* by the Jibaros, and to them their possession meant the possession of full power over the person it represented. [11]

Further, the *name-soul* is closely connected with the shadow-soul. According to primitive belief the name does not form an accidental appendage to a person, but is a real expression of his essence; in a person's name his soul is inherent. Hence the mysterious ceremonies with which name-giving is usually connected in the lower culture and the reluctance savage peoples often display against revealing their true names. [12] The danger is as great as being photographed: by revealing his true name the person in question puts himself completely in the power of the unknown stranger and exposes his soul to mysterious dangers.

The ideas about the soul, touched upon above, are found among most lower peoples, although there are, of course, individual differences, depending primarily on the different stages of culture they represent. Some ethnologists have been able to distinguish, in the psychology of certain higher uncultured peoples, still further conceptions of the soul. Miss Mary Kingsley, for example, found among the Congo negroes a distinction between four kinds of soul: (1) the soul which survives after death; (2) the soul which has taken up its abode in an animal of the wood; (3) the shadow-soul; and (4) the soul which appears in dreams and roams about. [13] We may question, however, whether here we have not less to do with different kinds of soul than with different forms under which one and the same soul acts.

The ideas about the soul held by the ancient Egyptians were likewise very complicated. The best known was the form of soul called *ka*, a kind of "double", a material second-self in addition to the body, although more ethereal than the latter,

and which during life-time resided in the body or its immediate neighbourhood, and after death stayed in the grave. The sepulchral statuettes in the graves of the Pharaohs seem to be likenesses of their *ka*. The *ka* was also conceived as a tutelary genius which was born with man, followed him in an invisible shape during his life-time and took care of him even after death. From this point of view the Egyptian *ka* may be compared with the ancient Scandinavian *hamingja* or *fylgja*, the personal tutelary or attending genius, in which case its connection with the soul proper is uncertain. The Egyptian *ba* was more like what we call the free-soul. This was generally represented as a bird with a human head and human hands. As we know, the "soul-bird" is a common phenomenon in the mythology of the lower peoples. Furthermore, the Egyptians were familiar with a form of soul called *ab*, the heart, regarded as the source of life and the seat of vital power. Its continued existence in the dead body was a necessary condition for the body's resurrection. By means of heart-shaped amulets, placed on the mummy, the Egyptians tried to prevent this "body-soul" from separating from the body. The Egyptians also believed in a particular shadow-soul, called *khaibit*, as well as a name-soul which they called *ran* or *ren*. Extraordinary measures were taken to prevent the extinction of the *ran*, and in the pyramidal texts we find prayers of the deceased that their *ran* might live and flourish at the side of the names of the gods. [14]

In the animistic beliefs of the Finno-Ugrian peoples we find clear traces both of a "body-soul" and of a "free-soul". The former is attached indissolubly to the body, or to a particular organ, and seems in fact to be a quality of the body itself. The heart, the liver, and the intestines appear to have been the organs regarded as the chief seat of this soul. This primitive conception exists most clearly among the Siberian Ostyaks and Vogules. In the Vogule myths the heroes eat the heart and liver of their slain enemies so as to absorb the power seated in those parts of the body. But already in early times the Finno-Ugrian peoples also had the idea of a kind of free-soul which seems sometimes to have been identified with the breath, but more often with the shadow. The breath gives the body life and maintains its functions. When man dies, it leaves the body through the mouth and the nostrils, but its subsequent fate is unknown. The idea of a breath-soul, however, occurs only

among the Wotyaks and the Syrjanes, who call it *lul* and *lol* respectively. On the whole it plays an insignificant part among the Finno-Ugrian peoples.

This is not so with the "free-soul" in the proper sense of the word, or the shadow-soul, which is given a special name by peoples of this race. Among the Tsheredmisses, for instance, as I said before, it is called *ort*. During a man's life-time this soul is the faithful companion of the body, but for various reasons may separate from it temporarily. This happens, for instance, in the dreams during sleep, and when the person gets frightened. Even when the person dies, no essential change takes place in the relation of the soul to the body. The former continues to stand in intimate relation to the latter, following the body to the grave where both find a new home. [15]

From the above survey on the idea of the soul held by various primitive peoples, it would certainly appear that there exist both individual differences and a general agreement. We are entitled to make a rough distinction evidently between the body-soul and a free-soul, although it is difficult to say whether, to the savage animist, this distinction is really as clear as it is to us, or even whether for him it exists at all. The question now arises as to how this primitive theory of the soul originated.

On the whole, I think Tylor's explanation still goes to the root of the matter. According to him, two main groups of phenomena have given rise to the idea of a soul, namely, the difference between a living body and a dead one, and, closely connected with this problem, the nature of the human shapes which appear in dreams and visions. From the beginning, the biological phenomena connected with life and death must have deeply impressed primeval man, just as they still impress the modern savage. To the savage the greatest of all problems is undoubtedly the problem of death. Even the higher animals display wonder and awe in front of a fallen comrade. Man's more developed intellect must have driven him from the first to form a theory concerning the fearful and mysterious change which takes place with the body in death. The cessation of the breath, of the beats of the heart and the pulse, and of other functions of life, must from the beginning have led thinking men to the conclusion that the living body is inhabited by an invisible being which leaves it in the moment of death. The

most primitive Indians of South America, for example, explain the phenomenon of death in this way.

In any case, the idea that man ceases to exist entirely when life leaves his body does not occur to a primitive mind. Just as the savage cannot conceive of a creation out of nothing, so he cannot grasp the idea that something actually existing could ever pass away into nothingness. The mysterious being must have left the body in the last breath of the dying person; hence the common idea of the soul which identifies it with the breath.

Moreover, when the idea of a soul first arose, all sorts of associations of ideas must have been at work. The soul, which in a visible or invisible shape is believed to stay somewhere in the neighbourhood of its former bodily frame, is further identified with the shadow or with the phantoms appearing to the savage in dreams; or, it is thought to have found a new abode in some animal being—an insect, a bird, a reptile, a quadruped—which at the time when death took place was seen in the neighbourhood of the dead body or the house of death. Such souls in animal shape play an important part in the lower cultures.

That dreams have been an important factor in helping to form the primitive idea of a human soul is beyond doubt, even though their importance is not as great perhaps as has often been assumed. However, it is a fact confirmed by records from different parts of the world that most lower peoples firmly "believe in dreams", that is, believe that the experiences they have during their dreams are as real as the waking ones. Among some of the Indian tribes I visited, notably the Jibaros, I was strongly impressed by their firm conviction of the reality of the experiences they had during sleep. Not only do they believe that they see the souls of their friends or enemies in the normal dreams; but when these dreams are artificially produced by certain narcotic drinks they meet the souls (*wakani*), which tell them the absolute truth about present and future events. In sleep the soul is temporarily detached from the body; it sees other souls and experiences many wonderful things. [16] By the same theory the savage explains many abnormal states of the body and the mind, such as swooning and so on.

Curious it is, on the other hand, to find that although according to primitive belief the soul is thought to have separated from the body and even to have taken up its abode in some other

material body, there is still something of it left in the body to which it originally belonged. To a primitive mind it is difficult, even impossible, to think of the dead body as entirely lifeless matter. In other words, it seems as if some sort of connection were still thought to exist between the body-soul and the free-soul. This persistent idea of connecting the body with something of its former life is seen in many of the burial rites of lower peoples, and also from their methods of preparing the dead body.

The soul's existence after its separation from the body and the possibility of its assuming, some time in the future, a new human form, an idea prevalent among many peoples, depends on the degree of integrity with which the dead body is preserved. Hence, for instance, the care with which the ancient Egyptians embalmed the corpses of the dead. The mummified body, they were convinced, conserved that part of the body which corresponded to the vital power, and so the whole soul was preserved. But the Egyptians were by no means the only people who tried for this reason to preserve the dead body from destruction. Since it is often difficult, however, to conserve the body in its entirety, other peoples have been satisfied with taking care of the bones, the soft parts of the body having at first been allowed to moulder or been intentionally removed.

Burial customs of this kind prevailed, for instance, among certain tribes in South America. The Bororó in Brazil exhume the body after the lapse of some time, strip it of its remaining fleshy parts, and take the skeleton asunder. The bones are painted red, carefully arranged in a basket, and finally buried with certain ceremonies. Customs of this kind are due to the belief that a part of the soul of the deceased remains in his bones. If these are carefully conserved, the deceased may some time in the future return by a new birth to a new earthly existence. The custom among many lower peoples of burning the corpse is based on the same idea. In that case the *ashes* of the burnt body sustain the spiritual part of man, and survive after death. [17]

In their way all these customs illustrate the ideas about the relation of soul and body which once prevailed and still prevail not only among primitive peoples but among those of higher culture.

As to the "free-soul" which after death is believed to leave

the body and lead a more or less independent existence, a few words may be added. This soul is by no means always identical with that mysterious spiritual being dealt with by the savage in his often very complicated burial and mourning customs. In many cases, the main object of these is to protect the survivors against the malevolent disease- and death-demon who has carried off one member of the community and is believed to be looking for fresh victims among the surviving relatives. This "death-spirit" has often been confounded by students of religion with the soul of the deceased, with whom in fact it always tries to identify itself. Later I shall analyse the ideas held by lower peoples about these various spiritual beings. We will then find an opportunity to establish the remarkable change which death is believed to bring about in the character of the dead.

The ideas of the soul thus developed will, as we shall soon find, become extraordinarily important for the further evolution of religion, and above all for that form of religion called the worship of nature. It will be apparent that those mysterious spiritual beings whom primitive peoples believe inhabit even inanimate nature are, in great measure, nothing more than the souls of departed persons also peopling that invisible world of spirits and demons who interfere in the welfare and destiny of man. Our first task, however, is to examine the connection existing between the idea of the soul and what is generally called magic.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SOUL AND MAGICAL "POWER"

WHAT we call "magic" comprises on the one hand a belief in supernatural powers, unseen although usually more or less materially conceived, on the other a certain technique for the use of such powers, and the ability to control, with their aid, both men and supernatural beings. In the latter case, magic forms part of practical religion and will be examined later in connection with religious cult. At present we are concerned only with the supernatural powers themselves, their essence and origin.

Keeping in mind the facts mentioned in the last chapter, it is not surprising to learn that one potent source of magic is the vital power of the human body itself. The power exists in the body both during the man's life-time and after his death, and seems above all to be identical with energy proceeding from what we have called the "body-soul". When it is said of this supernatural power or influence, called by the Melanesians *mana* and by the Iroquois *orenda*, that even a living man may possess it, we must take this statement to mean that particular *power of the soul* which some people possess by nature and which can be enhanced by artificial means. This appears from the fact that, among both peoples, it is the medicine-man or sorcerer in particular who is believed to possess the mysterious power. Later, we shall examine the peculiar theory that uncivilized peoples hold about the ability of such persons to harm their fellow-creatures by witchcraft or, on the contrary, to cure people from this evil. One shall then see that this ability is due to the extraordinary spiritual power they are believed to possess and through which they can master the spirits and demons.

The deification of men, as far as we can speak of it in the lower cultures, is, therefore, intimately connected with the idea of the soul and the power or influence proceeding from it. If a mortal man reaches the rank of a divinity even in his lifetime, this can be due only to the fact that he is believed to possess a

"stronger soul", a stronger *mana* or *orenda* than other people. For this reason, the medicine-man and sorcerer, in possession of an art which, to the uninitiated, appears miraculous and supernatural, is generally, among primitive peoples, the object of a reverence which in some cases may develop into religious worship. The real gods in Samoa, says an English missionary, are the medicine-men. It is curious to see how these men are feared, and how strong is the belief in their power over life and death. At one time in the Fijian Islands there was no difference between man and god, because many priests and old chiefs were regarded as sacred and even claimed to be divine beings. It would be easy to adduce statements to the same effect about medicine-men from other parts of the world. [1]

The question is, however, whether the difference between man and god in regard to the medicine-men and the sorcerers is really so insignificant as J. G. Frazer, for instance, has said. The fact that a magician is thought to be endowed with supernatural powers does not mean, as a rule, that even in his lifetime he is regarded as a supernatural being, and still less as the object of any real cult. Generally not until after his death does he attain this rank, because of the survivors' fear of his spirit, the power of which is looked upon as being greater after death. The real "man-god" is a person in whom a divine spirit is believed to have taken up its abode, he is a being who belongs essentially to the polytheistic stage in the history of religion.

Just as every man possesses a "body-soul", so he also more or less possesses that magical power, *mana* or *orenda*, which has its seat in this soul. The power exists in a far lesser degree in women and children than in grown-up people and men, and the body of the professional magician is specially charged with it. The question as to which part of the human body is the particular seat of the spiritual power can scarcely be answered exactly. The vital power pervades the whole body, providing life and activity, but primitive people generally assign various parts where it is thought to be particularly concentrated, such as the head, especially the hair, the heart, the liver, the diaphragm, the nails, the blood, and the saliva. Conceived as a vital power in this way, the psychical energy is naturally, in the first place, impersonal, but, occasionally, too, it is conceived as a personal spirit identical apparently with the "free-soul". A countless

number of magical customs, in vogue among the lower peoples throughout the world, are intimately connected with these ideas.

When the Dyaks of Borneo gain a victory over their enemies they are not satisfied with killing them, but also cut off their heads and take them home. Here they dry them in the air and hang them up at the ceilings of their huts. The heads are believed to possess a mysterious power which the victors can use for their own ends. [2]

"Head-hunting," says the Swedish explorer E. Mjöberg, "is an absolutely indispensable condition for good and suitable weather, for promoting the growth and fertility of the fields, for effecting that the forests may abound in game, that the dogs may be able to hunt effectively, that the rivers may abound in fish, that the peoples may be sound and vigorous, and the matrimonyes prolific." The same explorer states expressly that these wonderful effects are due to the belief that the soul still remains in the head [3], a statement confirmed by the Dutch missionary Warneck when he mentions that head-hunting is connected with the belief that the "soul-stuff" exists in the severed head. The same custom prevails among certain savage tribes in South America, such as the Mundrucus in Brazil and the Jibaros in Eastern Ecuador.

My statement about the supernatural effects ascribed to the head-trophy of the Dyaks applies almost word for word with the Jibaros also. The ideas of this savage people have been analysed in detail in my recent work *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, 1935. Through the many complicated ceremonies performed with it, the head of the enemy is transformed into a real fetish, an object charged with mysterious power or, as we may say, *mana*. How intimately this fetish worship is associated with animism appears from the fact that the Jibaro Indian, when he has obtained a human head, says that he has "taken a soul" (*wakáni*). The spiritual power is centred particularly in the hair, prepared with great care, but both the name *wakáni* given the fetish and several details at the great victory feast show clearly that this power is generally personified. The revengeful spirit of the slain enemy lies specially in the hair and the head of the trophy, but is at the same time thought of as a personal being who follows the victor everywhere trying to harm him. [4] I might add that the custom of scalping

among the North American Indians was formerly connected with the same ideas.

Apart from these barbaric war customs, there are a great many magical customs among primitive peoples in which the hair and nails play an important part. To possess a lock of a person's hair or a piece of his nail implies complete power over him, because the owner has acquired power over his *soul* which is situated in these parts of his body. In these cases the mysterious effect follows according to the principle of *pars pro toto*, "the part stands for the whole". This kind of magic has been called "contagious magic", a name with little point in it. On close analysis, the effect does not appear to be due to the "contact" as such, but to the fact that in the lock or the nail of the person in question his soul or vital power has its centre.

If, again, one asks how it is that primitive peoples usually regard the hair and the nails—as also the skin and claws of animals—as the seat of the soul, we can only answer that certain facts seem to point in this direction. The hair, as too the nails and the claws, grow rapidly all through life; even when cut short they grow again and soon attain their former size. It is natural, therefore, for the savage to infer that the vital power which animates the living body and causes its growth has more actuality in these parts, and that the vitality of the human and the animal body flows towards its extremities and is concentrated in them. The power of the hair to collect electricity has probably also helped to inspire such a belief.

The heart, too, is commonly regarded as the seat of the soul or the vital power. According to a statement by Rochefort, the Caribs of the Antilles assume a particular soul for each pulse they can feel or which is seen to move under the skin. The natives of the Tonga Islands believe that the soul extends to all parts of the human body, but is seated primarily in the heart. This belief is also reflected in the custom of the ancient Mexicans who, at the human sacrifices, used to take out the heart and stretch it towards the statue of the god. These sacrifices were magical in character: the vital power or soul was believed to be concentrated in the heart, and was transmitted to the god with a view to augmenting his own power. The belief that the soul is seated in the heart is also shown in the practice of cannibalism. By eating the heart or the liver of an enemy, power is acquired over him; the eater is believed to appropriate his courage and other

spiritual properties. War customs of this kind have appeared among primitive peoples as widely separated as the Australian aborigines, the Indians of South America, and certain Finno-Ugrian peoples.

Equally common is the idea that the vital power is identical with, or concentrated in the blood, an idea due apparently to the observation that life fades away with the blood. The belief of the Hebrews, that both the soul (*nephesh*) and the principle of life is in the blood, was evidently shared by most lower peoples and gave rise to numerous taboo restrictions. The blood taints and causes impurity because a dangerous, often revengeful spirit or demon is contained in it, but, for this very reason, it also contains much power. By smearing his face and his body with the blood of certain animals, the savage thinks he will transfer magical power to his body.

The ancient Peruvians and certain other barbaric peoples used to sprinkle their fields with the blood of sacrificed men, believing that thus would they promote fertility: the plant spirits on which fertility depends are thought in this way to be given more power to produce fruits. [5] And lastly, just as many people believe that it is possible to control a person through a lock of his hair or a piece of his nail, so they think that magical influence can be exerted upon a person through a drop of his blood.

The same holds true of the saliva which contains *mana* like the blood. A sorcerer who obtains some of another man's saliva acquires at the same time power over his life and death. This is another superstitious belief common apparently to all lower peoples. The saliva of a sacred man, or a man filled with magical power, is thought to have the highest beneficial effects. Hence the method observed by sorcerers all over the world in curing disease, namely, that of blowing and spitting repeatedly on the spot which is the seat of the evil. Not only in his saliva, but also in his breath and in his voice, when he leans over the patient reciting his conjurations, is there something of the mysterious spiritual power which enables him to constrain the disease-demon. The belief in the beneficial effects of the saliva finds expression, moreover, in some peculiar acts of etiquette. An English consul tells of a negro chief in Sudan that, when he was received by him, the chief grasped his hand and turning up the palm spat upon it, then looking into his face did the same. The consul was staggered by the man's audacity, but noting

that his features expressed kindness only, he returned the compliment with interest, much to the chief's delight. [6]

The instances mentioned may be enough to illustrate the connection between the soul and the bodily organs and the functions of life. According to primitive belief all these organs contain *mana* or magical power, and the more they have, the more powerful a soul the person in question is believed to possess.

The mysterious power does not exist merely in the living body but also in a dead one. Codrington's statement that in Melanesia the bone of a corpse possesses *mana* because the soul is embodied in it, is confirmed in the ideas of many other primitive peoples. It may be appropriate to call to mind the fact that the worship of relics, which flourished in Christianity and in many other higher religions, was due to the same animistic ideas. The more "power" (holiness) a person had in life, the more power his relics would have after his death. That kind of magic which refers to the dead body, however, is more of a negative than a positive nature; it is generally a *dangerous* power. This leads us to the second of the two central concepts of primitive magic, the conception of *taboo*.

*Tabu* (*tapu*) is a Polynesian word, but, like the Melanesian *mana*, it has long been adopted as a general term in the history of religion. It is difficult, however, to define this term exactly, because nowadays it is used to denote several quite heterogeneous phenomena. Priests, chiefs, and kings may be taboo, in which case common people are forbidden to come into contact with them. Certain parts of the body, especially the head, the hair, and the blood may be taboo and cannot be touched. Persons are taboo on particular occasions; warriors, for instance, after the slaying of an enemy, a hunter after he has killed the game, the relatives of a recently dead person, women during menstruation and child-birth. Certain kinds of food and drink may be taboo. The dead are taboo and their names cannot be mentioned. It is frequently the same with the names of the gods. Property can be tabooed and in that way protected. Certain sacred places and buildings, especially temples, are taboo; objects of religious cult are taboo, [7] etc. It is in Polynesia, naturally, that we meet with the notion of taboo in its most typical form, but being an extremely ancient religious notion, its origin is obscure. In Polynesia, persons, things, and conditions could

formerly be under a taboo; there were general taboos and private taboos; the taboo could be permanent or only occasional. Severe punishment, even capital punishment, threatened those who broke the rules of taboo. But the effect of a breach of taboo was generally purely mechanical: the offender ran the risk of immediately falling ill and dying. A Maori who had consumed the remains of a chief's food without knowing it, fell ill as soon as he realized what he had done and died a few hours later.

It is unnecessary to point out that the conception of taboo, with the extensive application it had formerly in Polynesia, has been of enormous religious and social importance.

It has been customary in the modern science of religion to distinguish between the conceptions of *mana* and taboo by saying that they denote the negative and positive aspects respectively of one and the same thing. As the term *tabu* has been used in Polynesia, and as it is generally used in the modern science of religion, it implies above all a prohibition, signifying a dangerous or harmful power or influence. When a person or thing is taboo, this means that they are pervaded by a mysterious quality, holiness, magical virtue, or whatever we like to call it, which makes any contact with them dangerous. Among the Polynesians, with their comparatively highly developed religion, taboo had a close relationship with the divine: everything was taboo that was connected with the gods and with cult. At higher stages of religious evolution, the dangerous influence of taboo often appears as a purely impersonal power acting mechanically, as something like the electric energy. As an illustration of this power a typical instance may be taken from the Old Testament. During the reign of David, the sacred Ark of the Covenant had to be moved from Baal in Judah to Jerusalem. The oxen which drew the cart became ungovernable. One of the men seized the Ark, pervaded with holiness, to prevent it from falling, and in consequence, he died on the spot. [8] In the lower religions, on the other hand, this dangerous influence is usually personified: it appears as a harmful or impure demon. As with *mana*, taboo, in its most typical form at least, has an animistic origin.

*Death* and *disease* seem to be the chief sources of taboo. A sick person is taboo because a dangerous and "impure" disease-demon has penetrated into the body. All persons and things therefore, which come into intimate contact with the patient, likewise become impure and taboo. Thus among many tribes

of South America I found the idea that when one member of the family is sick, the nearest relatives living in the same house are under a taboo. Even the food in the house is tabooed, the relatives of the patient being obliged to observe certain strict rules in regard to their diet. [9] Above all else, however, a *corpse* is regarded as taboo and believed to defile all who come into contact with it.

Looking at the matter from a civilized point of view, one would be inclined to say that it is death or the contagion of death that primitive peoples fear. On closer examination, we find that in most cases, if not always, this contagion of death is personified, conceived, that is, as a demoniacal being. Among the South American Indians, for example, all burial rites and purificatory ceremonies after death are obviously directed against a personal cause, the malevolent spiritual being who carried off one member of the community and is believed to be looking for fresh victims among the survivors. In the Gran Chaco the house of death and the whole village is generally purified by fire. Even the property of the deceased and especially his clothes and other things with which he had been in contact, are destroyed by fire. If many deaths have taken place through an epidemic, the whole village is burnt. In other cases it is purified by fire-brands. These are brandished round in all directions on the evening of the day when death took place, loud shouts being given from time to time to chase away the demons. [10] Numerous instances of the same kind could be quoted from other parts of South America [11] which seem to show clearly that the taboo of death has an animistic origin, or else arises from the fear of evil or harmful spiritual beings.

The same holds true in regard to other uncivilized peoples. Among the Finns, the taboo of death or the baneful influence proceeding from a corpse, was called *kalma*. It was supposed to originate from the spirits of the dead, called *keijukaiset*, who were believed to appear wherever a person was breathing his last or where there was a corpse. With the word *kalma* the Finns denoted in the first place the peculiar smell which was believed to follow these spirits, and also the harmful power or influence which had its seat in the dead body. Since this power had a personal cause, they also spoke of the " *kalma*-people" (*kalmanväki*), meaning the spirits of the dead. The sorcerer could secure possession of this mysterious " power " by digging

in the burial-place and procuring a little mould from a grave. The notion of *kalma* in primitive Finnish religion is therefore closely related to the notion of *väki*, treated before. [12]

Again, the Malagasy, according to the Swedish explorer Dr. Kaudern, use the word *faddy*, which means that something "cannot be done". Dr. Kaudern adds, however, that if, by the Polynesian *tabu*, we understand a wholly impersonal power existing in a thing or an act, the *faddy* of the Malagasy does not quite correspond to it, for in all the cases he was able to analyse, the *faddy* had a *personal* cause.

To a Malagasy, something is always *faddy* because the person breaking the prohibition exposes himself to the revenge of a supernatural being who feels offended. In most cases this being seems to be the spirit (*lolo*) of a deceased person. Two instances may be mentioned to illustrate the idea of the Malagasy. At the River Andranolava there was a place where it was *faddy* to pass the river in a canoe. Whoever wished to pass to the opposite side had to wade or make a *détour*; if he passed it in a canoe some misfortune would happen to him. An Englishman who dared to defy the prohibition and passed the river in a canoe, shortly afterwards fell seriously ill with malaria. This fact, of course, strengthened the natives in their belief that the place was taboo. On inquiry Dr. Kaudern learnt that a native had once been drowned at this place when he tried to pass the river in a canoe; his spirit (*lolo*) had taken up its abode in the water and would have nothing to do with canoes. [13]

At Batsiboka, another river in Madagascar, a rule existed that if a native passed the river he had to take off his hat, if any, and put it down on the bottom of the canoe in such a way that it could not be seen; it was *faddy* for him to show a hat. Again the reason seemed to be that at that place a mighty Sakalo had been drowned, who disliked the wearing of hats. His *lolo* inhabited the river and would not allow anybody in a hat to pass unpunished.

Among the Malagasy there exist taboos which have to be observed by all members of the community and others which have to be observed only by individuals or families. These are often food taboos. They likewise have a personal cause. A native, for instance, may dislike the meat of fowls or the meat of an ox. He expects his dislike to these foods to be shared by his descendants, to whom consequently the meat of fowls and

beef is *faddy*. The taboo, therefore, is hereditary. The reason of the prohibition may be completely forgotten in the course of time, but the rule is still strictly observed because, according to native belief, some misfortune will happen to the transgressor. [14]

This taboo notion of the Malagasy probably holds true of most primitive and barbaric peoples. Nothing is more natural than that the original reason for the taboo should gradually be forgotten by the peoples observing the rules of prohibition. This is specially true of peoples standing somewhat higher in culture: the ancient Hebrews, for example. What has been said of *mana* applies also to taboo: its connection with animism is usually apparent at primitive stages, whereas, at more advanced stages of culture, the animistic foundation is lost, and taboo appears simply as a dangerous supernatural power or energy.

Closely connected with the taboo of death is the taboo attached to certain magical instruments used at the mystery ceremonies and other things used in connection with a religious cult. It is a well-known fact, for instance, that masks, flutes, and bull-roarers play an important part in primitive religion and that, among many peoples, these mysterious instruments are taboo to the highest degree. Thus the masks and magical ornaments used formerly by the Indians in North-western America at their totem ceremonies, and to this day by some South American Indians at their death-feasts and mask-dances, are taboo afterwards to women and children because, during the magical ceremonies and conjurations, they have been in contact with the death-spirits. [15] By virtue of the conjurations these demons have been compelled to enter into the magical instruments. These have thus been charged with a power extremely dangerous to all uninitiated persons. In this, as in many other cases, the savage does not make a strict distinction between the personal and the impersonal; both ideas are blended together queerly.

In the case of the bull-roarers used both by the Bororó Indians in Central Brazil and the tribes of Central Australia we find a remarkable coincidence in regard to a magical rite between savage peoples who cannot possibly have been in any cultural contact with one another. The Australian aborigines call these sacred mystery instruments *churinga*. They are made of stone or wood and some are the exact equivalent of the bull-roarers of the Bororó. There can be

no doubt as to the nature of the dangerous taboo attaching to the Indian bull-roarers. In some South American tribes they have degenerated into mere playthings for the children, but among the Bororó they have retained their original character. While hurled round at the death-feasts they are believed to catch the spirits of the dead; the very booming or whistling sound they produce is supposed to be an imitation of the sounds of the spirits. [16]

It is equally clear that the *churinga* of the Central Australians have a similar animistic origin. Our knowledge of these sacred instruments is based on the information given by the English ethnologists Spencer and Gillen and the German missionary Strehlow. Each of these mysterious objects, one is expressly told, is intimately associated with the spirit part of some individual man or woman. The spirits, that is, the disembodied spirits of departed ancestors, reside at certain spots, having taken up their abode in remote times in some natural object, tree or rock. The spirits will be reborn again in their descendants by entering into a woman who happens to pass these places. The natives think that when a spirit-child enters a woman to be born, he drops his sacred stone, the *churinga*. When the husband of the woman finds the *churinga* which in a given case is supposed to be associated with a spirit-child, that *churinga* is called *churinga nani*, "the abode of the spirit", and becomes the object of a certain cult. The *churinga* are connected with the totems and figure prominently in the sacred totemic ceremonies which none but initiated men may witness. To uninitiated persons they are taboo to such an extent, that they cannot be seen by women and uninitiated men under pain of death or very severe punishment, such as blinding with a fire-stick. [17] In Strehlow's account, the close connection between the *churinga* and the animistic ideas of the Central Australians is made very clear according to him. The sacred instrument is regarded as the common body of the man and his totem ancestor. It connects the individual with his personal totem ancestor and guarantees him the protection of his tutelary spirit (*iningucua*). [18]

In the face of these facts I cannot understand how Söderblom, for instance, who in his above-mentioned work has paid much attention to the Australian *churinga*, arrived at the conclusion that the *churinga* had nothing to do with a soul or spirit but

refers to a "pre-animistic" stage of religious thought. [19] The Australian idea that the totem ancestor's *soul* is in the sacred instrument is set forth with unmistakable evidence both in Spencer and Gillen's and in Strehlow's account. Söderblom's view is all the more surprising when one remembers that a few years earlier (1906) he had, in an article on the primitive mystery ceremonies published in the *Ymer*, [20] emphasized rightly the obvious connection between the *churinga* and the animism of the Australian aborigines. The contradiction must be evidently explained from the fact that in his work on primitive religion of 1912, Söderblom has been influenced by the pre-animistic theory and had been induced accordingly to alter his earlier correct view on the subject.

There can be little doubt that from time immemorial the Australian blacks have been in the habit, at their great mystery feasts, of exorcizing the spirits of ancestors with their *churinga*, just as some Brazilian tribes exorcize the spirits of the dead at their death-feasts. The taboo of death, that is, the spirit of the deceased, is attached afterwards to the sacred instrument; hence the danger of any uninitiated person coming into contact with it. According to the belief of the Indians the woman who happens, even accidentally, to see the tabooed instrument, will assuredly be seized by the death-demon; she will afterwards die and be changed into an evil demon herself and become a danger to other people. Because of the breach of taboo of which she is guilty, such a woman is killed. The fact that she has done so unwittingly does not alter matters, because the taboo acts mechanically. [21]

It is the same among the Central Australians. Strehlow relates that if somebody happens to show the *churinga* to a woman, both are killed. Similarly a woman who accidentally comes upon a *churinga* is killed. [22] Neither in Australia nor in South America can such customs be explained merely as acts of cruelty or a desire on the part of the men to keep the women in a state of barbarous subjection; they are natural consequences of their ideas of taboo or "superstitions", if one likes to call them that.

Söderblom's opinion that "it is hopeless to try to bring these *churinga* under any current category", [23] seems therefore to be erroneous. On the contrary, we are dealing here with a most characteristic category of "sacred" mystery

instruments, met with in different parts of the world and which, in their way, illustrate the connection of the power or influence called taboo with purely animistic ideas.

In his *The Golden Bough*, J. G. Frazer draws the well-known distinction between what he calls homœopathic or imitative magic based on the principle of imitation, and contagious magic based on the principle of contact. A typical instance of the first kind of magic is that of images. The savage believes, for instance, that he can harm an enemy by making an image of him and piercing it with arrows or destroying it. Everything, he reasons, that happens to the likeness will also happen to the original. Again, we have contagious magic when the savage believes he can influence a person through a lock of his hair or a piece of his nail. Both kinds of magic Frazer calls sympathetic magic, and both, according to his theory, are ultimately dependent upon an erroneous association of ideas. On the one hand, the savage believes that things which resemble each other are identical, on the other, that things which have once been in contact with each other, continue to be so even after separation.

To a scientist who is trying to bring system into that apparently often contradictory chaos of ideas presented to him in the savage world of thought, a theory like this may have its value as a working hypothesis, but primitive peoples themselves certainly do not look at matters in this way. They do not make that distinction between different kinds of influence represented, on the one hand, for instance, by the magic of images, and on the other, by contagious magic. In both cases, of course, from our point of view, an erroneous association of ideas is working. But this association of ideas does not by itself explain the mysterious connection which magic assumes between the image and its original or between the part and the whole. When the savage makes an image of his enemy with which to harm him, he believes that in the image he has caught the enemy's *soul*. By invisible but to him quite real ties the image is connected with the person it represents, and the possibility of influencing the original is due to this supposed fact. Thus it is a wholly characteristic primitive idea to which Dudley Kidd refers when he mentions that, according to the belief of the Kafirs of South Africa, a man can be magically influenced through his shadow or photography.

"because it is supposed to be an emanation of his personality." [24]

The ancient Peruvians moulded images of fat, mixed with grain, to imitate the person whom they disliked or feared and then burned the effigy on the road along which the intended victim was to pass. They called this "burning the soul". But according to whether the victim was an Indian or a Viracocha, that is, a Spaniard, they drew a delicate distinction between the kinds of materials to be used in the manufacture of the images. To kill an Indian, they employed maize and the fat of a llama; to kill a Spaniard, they used wheat and the fat of a pig, "because Viracochas did not eat llamas and preferred wheat to maize." [25] This distinction made between an Indian and a white man is significant and indicates that the ideas of primitive peoples are more complicated in these matters than Sir James Frazer assumes.

In their Black Magic the Malays, tells Mr. Skeat, are in the habit of preparing wax images of persons whom they want to injure. Before operating, however, they try to entice their victim's soul into it: "for them the image alone is not enough." [26] In the same way we have seen that the "sympathetic" connection between the lock of a person's hair or a bit of his nail and the person himself is due to the idea that, in those parts, the soul is present. Consequently, in both cases, magic is closely associated with animistic ideas.

To explain the former by the Law of Similarity and the latter by the Law of Contact, as does Frazer, scarcely conforms, therefore, with the ideas held by savage peoples. To them the "contact" in the one case is just as real as in the other. On the whole it is worth considering whether all so-called sympathetic magic has not originally been founded on the notion of a soul, spirit, essence, or whatever we like to call it, thus making the connection of "sympathy" possible. In opposition to Sir James G. Frazer, who takes magic to have preceded religion in the evolution of thought, I think there are grounds for assuming that a great number of magical practices which, nowadays, have nothing to do with a belief in spirits, have originally had a purely animistic basis.

In any case, the instances adduced in this chapter show clearly that in some of its most typical and important forms magic is closely associated with the idea of a soul. But we

have to note further that in man there is an intrinsic tendency to project his own psychical life upon the phenomena of the surrounding world. The soul and the magical power proceeding from it may also occur *outside* man, in animals, in plants, and in inanimate objects of nature. In this way arises nature animism and the worship of nature with fetishism and the ideas of a supernatural power in natural objects. Phenomena of this kind will be examined in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER V

### THE WORSHIP OF ANIMALS

**T**O civilized man, nothing appears more strange and unintelligible than the religious reverence paid by primitive peoples all over the world to animals. On closer examination, however, it may seem natural that the savage, just as he shows in general a tendency to project his own internal life upon the external world, should ascribe to animals the same kind of soul as he himself possesses.

To understand fully that peculiar form of primitive religion called animal worship, we should further consider that just as the savage removes the boundary between organic and inorganic nature, so he also overlooks the sharp distinction made by civilized man between man and the animal world.

To the former, the animals do not represent any creation of a lower order; intellectually and morally he regards them as equal to, if not superior to himself. Many animals indisputably surpass man in strength, swiftness of movement and acuteness of the senses. The obvious power, for instance, of many insects, birds, and other animals to foretell the weather may be one of the reasons why primitive peoples generally ascribe to them a prophetic clear-sightedness in other respects.

In the primitive worship of animals we find a special application of the principle that uncultured man deifies everything which appears strange and unintelligible, especially when it influences, or is believed to influence, his welfare in some way. It is a general rule that the animals most worshipped are those which, through their mysterious powers and qualities, excite his imagination and inspire him with fear or awe. Thus the serpent, because of its peculiar outward appearance, its mysterious movements, and, above all, of its death-bringing bite, tends specially to excite the imagination of a primitive mind, and has in fact played an important part in the mythology and religion of most lower peoples. For the same reason,

animals such as the lion, the tiger, and the crocodile have been worshipped as evil and destructive divinities.

The opinion has been expressed that primitive man originally worshipped certain animals, not because they were looked upon as animated by a spirit or soul, but simply because, through their mysterious qualities, they awakened feelings of fear and awe and were thus raised to the rank of divinities. In this way Dr. Marett explains the worship of animals from a pre-animistic point of view. "There are many animals," Dr. Marett says, "that are propitiated by primitive man neither because they are merely useful nor merely dangerous, but because they are, in a word, uncanny. . . . Religious awe is towards Powers, and these are not necessarily spirits or ghosts, though they tend to become so." [1]

I shall not dwell long upon these pre-animistic speculations in regard to animal worship. It is remarkable, however, that Dr. Westermarck seems to share a similar view. According to him, animals, like inanimate objects of nature, were originally deified simply because of the mysterious quality attached to them. "It has been said of savages," he states, "that they do not worship the thing itself, only the spirit indwelling in it. But such a distinction cannot be primitive. The natural object is worshipped because it is believed to possess supernatural power, but it is nevertheless the object itself that is worshipped." In support of this view, Dr. Westermarck quotes a statement by Castrén relating to the Samoyedes. "Castrén, who combined great personal experience with unusual acuteness of judgment, states that the Samoyedes do not know of any spirits attached to objects of nature, but worshipped the objects as such: in other words, they do not separate the spirit from the matter but adore the thing in its totality as a divine being." [2]

However, contrary to what Dr. Westermarck assumes, Castrén was obviously mistaken on this point, as shown by recent research among the Samoyedes. Dr. Donner, one of our best authorities on the Samoyedes, informs us that among them the worship of nature is based wholly on animism and that they do not worship the objects as such but as the spirit dwelling in or behind the object. This also holds true evidently of their worship of animals, as we shall presently see.

What the truly "primitive" form of animal worship may

have been, is difficult to say, but the fact would seem that there is no savage tribe at present which worships an animal merely because it is mysterious, or uncanny, or because it awakens feelings of fear and awe. For the savage, the mystery of a certain animal is only the external inducement to regard it with religious or superstitious reverence. All savages nowadays, at any rate, seem to have very concrete ideas about the animals they worship as divine.

Whereas civilized man, proud of his supposed mental superiority over the animal world, contemptuously speaks of animals as soulless, uncultured peoples from time immemorial have held another and more correct idea of the matter. They have been convinced that the animal as well as man possesses a soul, and when an animal is worshipped as a divine being, that worship refers above all to the soul animating it. Primitive peoples have much the same idea about this animal soul as about the human soul. First and foremost, it is identical with the vital power which pervades the body and guides its movements. The power of the soul is concentrated particularly in such parts of the animal body as the skin, the claws, and the teeth. In the birds, the vital power resides also in the beak and the feathers. A countless number of superstitious practices relating to the skin, claws, and teeth of animals or the feathers of birds are due to this idea.

On the whole, primitive peoples scarcely recognize any special "animal soul" as clearly distinguished from the human soul. As we have seen, there does not exist any fundamental distinction between man and the lower animals. It is the same spirit which animates them; the material frame only may vary. Accordingly, the myths of many peoples tell us that in primeval times all animals were men—or, vice versa. This intimate association between man and animals in the lower culture is also apparent in the primitive idea of the transmigration of souls. The belief that in the moment of death the soul of man migrates into an animal is met with among primitive peoples in all parts of the world and could be illustrated with numerous examples. Even among the Australian aborigines certain animals are the objects of a cult because they are looked upon as the reincarnation of the spirits of the departed. The totem animal is often believed to harbour the soul of an ancestor or of one of these mysterious human First

Beings mentioned in Australian legends. [3] Some of the Papuans on the coast of New Guinea believe that after death, human souls are reincarnated in animals such as the Australian emu, the wild pig, the alligator, and certain fish, and they abstain from eating the meat of these animals. [4]

The belief in the transmigration of souls occurs in many islands in Oceania, in Hawaii, for instance, where the shark, certain lizards, owls, rats, and other animals are the objects of a cult because they are looked upon as the reincarnation of departed souls. Similar ideas are met with in Assam, Burma, and Cochin China, as well as among the natives of the Malay Archipelago. [5] The Karyans of Borneo believe that when the soul of a man separates from the body after death, it takes the shape of a quadruped or a bird. If a deer, for example, is seen in the neighbourhood of the grave of a man who has recently died, his relatives will be quite certain that his soul has taken up its abode in this animal, and will abstain from eating the meat of deer. [6]

The Malays of Borneo, as we have seen, assume the existence of two souls in man. Some animals are believed to have only one soul. These are called "real animals". Others again, domestic animals like the deer, the grey monkeys, and the wild pigs, are thought to have *two* souls like man himself, one *bruwa* and one *ton luwa*. At times these may live like men and inhabit houses like men. The soul of the panther is particularly feared and the killing of this animal is attended by special and peculiar ceremonies. Among other things the hunters have to coat themselves with the blood of fowls in order to protect themselves against the revengeful spirit of the slain animal. [7] We are told of the Battas of Sumatra that they seldom kill a tiger, or do so only in observing certain ceremonies, because they believe that the souls of their dead relatives pass into this ferocious beast. [8]

The same belief prevails in many parts of Africa, both among Hamitic or partly Hamitic peoples and among the different Bantu tribes. In a very typical way it appears among the Kafirs of South Africa. These natives, we are told by Dudley Kidd, associate the spirits of their ancestors with some special animal, most commonly with a snake, though in some tribes with crocodiles, lions, elephants, and so forth. These animals then serve as a modified totem. It is most unlucky to kill them

even by accident, a sacrifice being required to put matters right.

By far the commonest belief, however, is that the ancestors visit the living in the shape of, or through the medium of, snakes. A chief, for example, is supposed to enter into a boa constrictor, the lesser fry into small snakes, and the women into sleepy fat old lizards, which are considered most contemptible creatures. A snake is known to be an ancestral spirit only when its entrance and exit to the kraal cannot be observed. The Kafir will sometimes tell you that it is the shade of the dead man who enters the snake and thus makes it love to haunt the kraal for the sake of company. "It is a strange spectacle," Dudley Kidd says, "when sitting with some Kafirs at a kraal, to see a snake suddenly glide out of the cattle kraal. A stranger picks up a stick to kill it, but the people say, 'Hold. Do you not know that this is our ancestor? Would you kill our ancestor?' When the snake makes its appearance there is a great joy in the kraal, the people saying, 'Our ancestor has come to visit us.'" [9]

Livingstone tells of the Bantu negroes in the Mopane district, that they allowed the lions to propagate freely, because they believed that the souls of their chiefs entered into these animals and therefore they dared not kill them. For the same reason the lion was regarded as sacred by the Mkanga at the River Zambesi. [10] The crocodile likewise in many parts of Africa is worshipped as a sacred animal, among others by the tribes of Madagascar. These imagine that the souls of their departed relatives are reincarnated in different animals, according to their social status while alive. The souls of noble people are reincarnated in python serpents, crocodiles, and eels, and the natives try to facilitate the process in various ways. [11] The Congo negroes believe that their departed relatives change into hippopotami, leopards, gorillas and antelopes, and consequently treat these animals with religious reverence. [12]

Ideas of the same kind are quite common among the Indians of the New World. In North America, belief in the transmigration of souls refers in the first place to those animals revered as clan totems. Many Indian tribes therefore think that the souls of their ancestors are reincarnated in animals like the grizzly bear, the buffalo, the wolf, the eagle, and in snakes, especially the rattlesnake. Similarly, animal beings play an

important part in the religion and superstition of the Central and South American Indians. Of the quadrupeds, the jaguar and other species of the feline family are of special interest. Ideas about a "man-tiger" seem to be current among natives in all parts of the continent where this ferocious beast is found. Thus among the Quichua-speaking peoples of the Andes from Peru to the Argentine, the jaguar has always been regarded with superstitious fear because it is thought in some cases to be *uturúncu*, that is, men who have been changed into tigers. The Cainguâ on the Upper Paranâ in Misiones believe that a tiger roaming about in the neighbourhood of a burial-place is nothing more than the buried dead person, who has been changed into this animal. [13]

I found the same belief among the Chaco tribes, also among the Indians of Western Amazonas. Tribes like the Jibaros, the Záparos, the Canelos Indians and the Napo Indians look upon the jaguar as an evil demon, and especially as the reincarnation of the spirit of a medicine-man or sorcerer. They believe this of all species of the feline family. Even in his lifetime a sorcerer is supposed to be able to transform himself occasionally into a jaguar or a tiger-cat for the purpose of bewitching other people. This shape he assumes particularly after death. If a jaguar attacks or kills an Indian, or even takes one of his swine or dogs, it is immediately clear to the rest that an enemy sorcerer has been at work, taking the form of the beast to carry out his evil designs. In the same way medicine-men in the shape of jaguars or tiger-cats are believed to send disease. Hence, when a medicine-man cures a patient, he mentions the jaguar and the tiger-cats among different demoniacal animals which may possibly have sent the evil. Both the Jibaros and the Canelos Indians make a distinction between "natural" tigers and demoniacal tigers, the latter being the species which attack man or do him harm. The same distinction is made in regard to several other animals. [14]

The spirits of malignant sorcerers are also thought to pass temporarily into other animal beings which, through some peculiarity in their appearance or their habits of life, are likely to give rise to superstitious beliefs. Among these the venomous snakes are of particular interest. The idea generally prevalent in the whole of tropical South America seems to be that with the bite of the venomous snake, an evil spirit enters into the body.

But the Indians go still further in their theory. The Jibaros, for instance, are convinced in every case that the demon (*wakanu*) which entered into the person and stung him to death was nothing more than the devil-soul of a sorcerer, who had taken the shape of the reptile in order to kill his enemy. Just as the Indians distinguish between "natural" and demoniacal jaguars, so they distinguish between "natural" and demoniacal or supernatural snakes, the latter being snakes in which the souls of sorcerers have temporarily taken up their abode. The Jibaros call such snakes *tunchima*, i.e. "bewitched". If a non-venomous snake stings, or if the bite of a venomous one is harmless, this is merely an ordinary or "natural" snake-bite. If, on the other hand, the person becomes dangerously ill or dies as a result, the snake was *tunchima*. Therefore, persons stung by bewitched snakes generally die, or can be cured only by the magic art of other sorcerers. [15]

Few phenomena of the animal world have impressed the primitive Indian mind as strongly as venomous snakes. I may add in this connection that it is evidently the venomous snakes which suggested to the Indian sorcerers the ideas upon which their magic art is based. Moreover, originally, the Indian arrow-poison is probably nothing more than an imitation of snake poison, the same superstitious ideas being associated with both. [16]

According to Indian belief the souls of dead persons are also frequently reincarnated in birds, in which case they are regarded as sacred or demoniacal. In nocturnal birds especially, the Indians often fancy they meet the spirits of departed relatives, who speak to them in the mournful and dismal tones of these birds. But the most common idea about birds is that they serve temporarily as the agents of malignant sorcerers, who are carrying out their evil designs against other people. As with venomous snakes, so may certain birds be "bewitched". This implies that a sorcerer is supposed to have hidden in the bird his own soul, or his death-bringing magical "arrow". The bird will thereupon carry it away and use it against the person whom the sorcerer wants to kill or harm. The birds connected with this belief are generally notable for some peculiarity in their appearance, their habits of life, or their sounds. If birds are believed thus to act as the agents of wizards, one can understand why they figure so frequently in the conjurations used,

for instance, by the medicine-men among the Indians of the Amazonas, for trying to cure patients bewitched by such wizards. [17]

Such ideas are by no means limited to the South American Indians. They occur among many other primitive peoples living under the same natural conditions. Among the Indians of North America, for example, it is commonly believed that certain animals may cause sickness, an idea with the same origin probably as in South America.

I myself have summarized in the following way the ideas held by the South American Indians in regard to animal spirits. "According to the Indian theory all animals—quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, insects—possess a spirit or soul which in essence is of the same kind as that animating man, and which survives the destruction of the body. All animals have once been men, or all men animals. This seems to be the view explicitly or implicitly held by all tribes. Hence the primitive view which the Indians share with most other uncivilized peoples, and which intellectually and morally places the animals on a footing of equality with man. In the practical religion or superstition of the Indians, however, only such animals play a part which for special reasons—above all on account of the harm that they do to man—have particularly attracted their attention. Such animals are either, in general, looked upon as the permanent or temporary reincarnations of certain human souls; or they are believed incidentally to carry the magical arrow of the sorcerers and thus to serve as their agents in working evil. Since the magical "arrow" is regarded as a vehicle for the sorcerer's own soul, it follows that there is no essential difference between those two sets of ideas." [18]

This view of Indian "animal worship", which rejects the assumption of a special "animal soul", is shared on the whole by so acute a student of Indian customs as Sir Everard F. Im Thurn, who, among other things, states with special reference to the Guiana Indians: "It is not, therefore, too much to say that according to the view of the Indians, other animals differ from men only in bodily form and in their various degrees of strength. And they differ in spirit not at all; for just as the Indian sees in the separation which takes place at death or in dreams proofs of the existence of a spirit in man, so in this same death-analysis of body and spirit—all other qualities being in

his view much the same in men and other animals—he sees proof of the existence in every animal of a spirit similar to that of man." [19]

Turning now to another part of the world, we find among the Finno-Ugrian, Turco-Tartarian, and other peoples of Northern Asia, for instance, certain forms of animal worship, but only a few traces of the theory of the reincarnation of human souls in animals in the proper sense of the word. Thus the Votyaks believe that, among other things, departed relatives may visit the survivors in the shape of butterflies, [20] an idea prevalent among many peoples and which I myself found among the Indians of Eastern Ecuador. The Lapps tell how a deceased person, who had been buried in an island, flew over the lake in the shape of a big bird. During his rambles the soul of the Lappish *noida* (sorcerer) was able to hurry along the earth as a reindeer, to fly through the air as a bird, to dive through the depths as a fish, and to crawl in the interior of the earth as a snake. [21] According to the belief of the ancient Finns, the souls of the departed could also roam about in the shape of wolves, that is, be changed into werewolves (*vironusi*). [22]

The bear has been the most important of the animals worshipped among the Finno-Ugrian peoples of Northern Russia and Siberia and among other peoples of Northern Asia, for instance the Samoyedes. The ideas about it appear to have been much about the same everywhere: it was not looked upon as an "animal" in the strict sense of the word, but as a personality, equal or rather superior to man in powers and qualities. The ancient Finns in general seem to have thought of the bear as human in origin, in some cases as the soul of a *noida* reincarnated in the beast. Professor Krohn is evidently right in stating that the worship of the bear among the Finns and the Lapps was closely connected with the worship of the dead. [23] Dr. Karjalainen makes the same statement about the Jugra peoples, the Ostyaks and Vogules of Northern Asia. "The reverence paid to animals," he says, "has the same foundation as the one from which the worship of the dead has arisen, namely, the idea of the soul. The worship of animals is a form of the worship of the departed in the wide sense of the word; it is the cult of an animal's spirit which is believed to be capable of action after death."

According to this author, the only distinction between these

forms of primitive worship is, that whereas a dead man is a completely individual being, game killed at the same time is representative of the whole species to which it belongs. The rites performed after the killing of a bear have, of course, for their object the propitiation of the free-soul of this beast, but at the same time they refer to the whole genus. [24] Such facts undoubtedly tend to confirm the view hinted at above, namely, that the Finno-Ugrian religion has its very foundation in the worship of the dead. They also help us to understand that the reverence paid to animals among these peoples, has a purely animistic basis. It cannot, as is suggested by Dr. Marett and Dr. Westermarck, be explained merely from the "uncanny" character or the "mysteriousness" of certain animals.

The Ostyaks and the Vogules also worship animal beings such as the wolf and the elk, birds like the horned owl, the loom, the swan, and the woodpecker, reptiles like the snake, the lizard, the toad, etc. [25] As of the bear, the same may be said of these: there is no belief in a regular transmigration of human souls into these animals, but, nevertheless, the soul animating the animals is thought in some way to be a human soul, and the cult surrounding them is exactly the same in detail as the cult of the dead.

That the worship of animals refers to the soul believed to animate them, appears also from the ceremonies, touched on above, which in some cases accompany the killing of the game. I have already mentioned an instance of this kind in reference to the Bororó in Brazil. They consider that no animal killed in hunting, no fish caught in the river can be eaten unless it has previously been "blessed" by a medicine-man. This is due to the supposition that the souls of the medicine-men, *bari*, are reincarnated preferably in the animals and fish most appreciated as food. [26]

In North America, for instance, ceremonies of the same kind were performed by the Indians of British Columbia with the grizzly bear and by the Cherokee Indians with the eagle and the rattlesnake when killed. Their object was to propitiate the soul of the slain animal. Otherwise the revenge would turn against the hunter and his whole tribe. Among the Cherokee the eagle could be killed only by an "eagle-killer" specially selected for the purpose, who knew those prayers and conjurations by which the spirit of the powerful bird could be propitiated. Like-

wise these Indians killed a rattlesnake only in urgent cases, after which they had to ask the forgiveness of the slaughtered reptile through a priest. [27]

Precisely the same were the ceremonies performed by the ancient Finns and Lapps, the Siberian peoples and the Ainu of Japan after the killing of a bear. [28] Finnish peoples such as the Syrjanes and Votyaks believed that the bear knew his enemy and could persecute him even when dead. They thought it dangerous, therefore, to laugh in front of a slaughtered bear. [29] Among the Finns proper the dead bear was harangued, all sorts of flattering attributes and pet names being addressed to him. The beast was asked to pardon those who had taken his life; or the hunters would try to make themselves guiltless by blaming another person for what had happened.

In the same way among the Koryak, when a dead bear is brought to the house, the women come out to meet it, dancing with fire-brands. The bear-skin is taken off together with the head; one of the women puts on the skin, dances in it, and entreats the bear not to be angry, but to be kind to the people. At the same time they offer meat on a wooden platter to the dead beast, saying, " Eat friend ". Afterwards, a ceremony is performed for the purpose of sending the dead bear, or rather his spirit, back to his home. This ceremony is intended to protect the people from the wrath of the slain bear and his kinsfolk, and so to ensure success in future bear-hunts. [30]

Without entering upon a further survey of animal worship as far as uncultured peoples are concerned, one can establish the fact that there is scarcely an animal too insignificant to become the object of worship. Even animals like reptiles, fish, and insects may serve as the permanent or temporary abode of a human soul. As to the doctrine of reincarnation or metempsychosis, it is a well-known fact that it has not been limited to so-called primitive peoples. It has formed part and parcel of certain higher religions like Brahmanism and Buddhism, while Greek philosophers like Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Plato have, due doubtless to oriental influence, adopted it in their philosophical systems. Both Pythagoras and Empedocles seem to have taught that human souls may pass not only into animals, but also into plants. [31] In the systems of these philosophers, however, just as in Indian Brahmanism, the doctrine of reincarnation is associated with certain ethical ideas of moral

retribution, etc., of which uncultured peoples know nothing. The origin of such ideas in the higher Indian religions is still an unsolved problem, all the more enigmatical inasmuch as the doctrine of reincarnation, even in its primitive form, seems to have been unknown to the Aryan peoples in prehistoric times.

Speaking of the religious ideas of the Indians of North-West Brazil, an English ethnologist points out that "the Indians believe in the temporary transmission of the disembodied soul into the form of an animal, bird, or reptile, but not in a regular and enforced series of such transmissions. This temporary transmission is for the pursuance of a certain aim, perhaps for some indefinite length of time. Whether the animal is human, whether, when invaded, it incorporates two spirits and becomes dual-souled, the Indian does not relate." [32] This may, I believe, be said of most primitive peoples. Vainly shall we look for an answer to the question as to how, in such cases, the two souls, the animal's "own" soul and the invading "human" soul are related to one another. Savages are not used to systematizing their ideas, and a problem with a theoretical interest only will scarcely present itself to their mind. Certainly it does seem that the animals looked upon as the reincarnation of persons important and mighty in life, are those which become the objects of worship or of superstitious practices. Among other things, as we shall see later, totemism is most probably based on this idea.

The ideas mentioned above with special reference to modern primitive peoples, may also explain animal worship as it existed among peoples of archaic culture like the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, and the Greeks. It is curious to find, among so highly cultured a people as the Greeks, numerous traces of an animal worship which must be classified as markedly primitive. Not only were animals attributed with a soul, but they were even regarded as personalities responsible for their actions. That such a view actually prevailed is shown, for instance, by the rule in Plato's *Laws* which prescribes that an animal which causes the death of anyone shall be prosecuted for murder by the kinsmen of the deceased, and, after the trial, be slain by them and cast beyond the border. [33] Moreover, wonderful faculties were often ascribed to them by the ancients. "Nature", says Pliny, "has endowed most animals with the gift of forecasting winds, rain, and storm, and as to their power to foretell

the destiny of man many observations could be made. They warn man by their cries and by their entrails which are often examined by people who hope to foresee their destiny in them. On the other hand, they have often showed their power and their superiority to man by causing him enormous harm." [34]

These are the selfsame ideas one finds presented to the primitive mind everywhere. And from such a general viewpoint it is only a step to the conception of certain creatures as incarnate deities.

When we are told by Ælian, for instance, that the Delphians worshipped the wolf, the Samians the goat, the Ampraciots the lioness, and the Thebans the weasel, [35] we cannot, in the absence of further statements, assign with certainty the ideas upon which these cases of local animal worship were founded. Ælian's explanation that the Ampraciots worshipped the lioness because this animal had killed their tyrant Phaylos and had thus given them their liberty, [36] contains at least the general truth that ideas of the supernatural are often connected by lower peoples with outstanding incidents. The wolf as the incarnation of everything that is dark, cruel, and destructive in nature, played rather an important part in Greek mythology, but there is also evidence of its sometimes actually being propitiated and worshipped as a terrible deity. [37]

As to birds, Aristotle tells that the Thessalians worshipped the stork as a god. According to him, the origin of this cult was that the storks devoured the snakes which at a certain time had increased so enormously in Thessalia that they threatened to expel the people from that country. The killing of a stork was strictly forbidden and was ranked with homicide. [38] Among birds of prey the eagle was the most important. The Greeks called it a "divine" bird because of its power of high flight and keen sight. The owl, if not worshipped as a deity, at any rate played its part in the superstition of the Greeks. Owing to its habit of living in solitary deserts and its awful nightly shrieks they looked upon it as a bird of ill-omen, not only for individuals, but for whole states. [39]

There are also numerous traces of ophiolatry in the ancient Greek religion. Serpents were believed to be gifted with a mysterious knowledge of the plants which could revive the dead. They fancied, moreover, that the departed frequently assumed the shape of this reptile, thus appearing to the living.

The "chthonic" character of the snake, that is, its habit of lurking in underground places, tended to give rise to such a belief; in fact, Herodotus calls the serpent "a child of the earth" (*gēs pais*). Hence it became a symbol of all things subterranean and especially of the grave. Serpent worship among the Greeks was thus to a certain extent a form of the worship of ancestors. [40] But there are also some instances of direct ophiolatry. The Athenians, for instance, according to Herodotus, had in their Acropolis a huge serpent which was the guardian of the whole place and was fed every month with honey-cakes. The same writer tells us that in the neighbourhood of Thebes there were some sacred serpents of a peculiar kind, with two horns growing out of the top of their head. When they died, these snakes were buried in the temple of Zeus. [41] In the Peloponnesus, tells Ælian, the Argives considered snakes in general sacred and did not kill them. If we add that the Thessalians worshipped ants, that in some parts of Greece mice were looked upon as prophets and in some sense as divine beings because of the harm they caused, that fish like the dolphin and the eel, as well as the lobster, were held sacred and regarded with great veneration, [42] we may conclude that the worship of animals played a strikingly important part in the religion of the greatest people of antiquity.

At a time when it was customary to solve the most important problems of primitive religion with the help of the theory of totemism, it was considered quite natural to assume that the animal beings worshipped or held sacred by the Greeks were originally nothing but totem animals. Jevons, for instance, to whom totemism "is the only satisfactory answer why certain plants and animals are sacred", finds it highly probable that such instances of animal worship as those referred to above could have their root in totemism. [43] The fact is, however, that there are only faint traces of a clan organization among the ancient Greeks and no real evidence of a totemic system. The sacredness ascribed to certain animals probably had a very different origin, but, owing to the scarcity of evidence, it is difficult, even impossible, to assign this origin in each case.

Somewhat the same may be said, for instance, of the worship of animals in the ancient Egyptian, the Canaanite-Phœnician, and the Mexican religions. Like the Greeks, these ancient peoples often represented their higher gods as theriomorphic.

The worship of the divine being in the shape of a bull in the Canaanite cult of *baal*, had even as we know penetrated into the Israelite Jahwe-religion. Among the Egyptians several animals were the objects of religious reverence; supernatural powers and faculties were ascribed to them, among these, the faculty of foretelling future events. When we learn that animals like the cat, the crocodile, the hippopotamus, the hawk, and the ibis were regarded as "sacred", we may unhesitatingly compare this worship with the one found among most lower peoples of the present day. Although it has been asserted that "for the Egyptians, totemism, may be regarded as certain", [44] I believe that, as with the Greeks so with the Egyptians; the worship of these and other animals has little or nothing to do with the said problematic totemism, but must be explained wholly in terms of the impression made on the mind of the primitive ancient inhabitants of the valley of the Nile by certain striking and ferocious quadrupeds and reptiles or mysterious birds. A far more difficult problem arises, the association of some of the most important divinities with certain animals in the highly developed Egyptian religion. The deity Isis was represented by the head of a cow, Horus by the head of a hawk, Typhon by the head of an ass, and so on. In regard to other Aryan religions, a "totemic" explanation does not help us in the least. At the same time, from the sources at our disposal, it is difficult to derive any satisfactory theory as to the peculiar fact hinted at above.

Leaving out of account the difficulties which the worship of animals offers in certain polytheistic religions, one may state, as a result of this short survey, that, as far as one can judge, the religious reverence paid to certain animal beings in lower cultures has an animistic origin. The "sacredness" ascribed to certain animals by some peoples, the real reverence paid to them by others, refers to the soul believed to animate them. We may go even a step further and state that on closer investigation the soul, worshipped in animals, proves to be a human soul which in one way or another has taken up its abode in the animal in question.

Most lower peoples are familiar with the theory of metempsychosis or the belief in the reincarnation of the dead in animals, and even where no belief is found in a regular transmigration of souls, as among Aryan and most North Asiatic

peoples, the "animal soul" worshipped is still regarded as being essentially of the same kind as man's. But just as the soul which inhabits the human body becomes the seat of a remarkable magical power, the same may be said of the animal soul. It is a well-known fact that uncivilized peoples commonly prepare all sorts of amulets and magical "medicines" from certain parts of the bodies of slaughtered animals.

If, for example, the soul of a sorcerer is believed to have taken up its abode in a quadruped, a bird, or a reptile, these beings are likely to become "magical". Certain parts of their body may become charged in the highest degree with the same psychical power, *mana*, or whatever one likes to call it, possessed by the sorcerer. But it is also natural that the reincarnated soul should participate in the powers and faculties of the very animal in which it has taken up its new abode. The soul of a medicine-man reincarnated in a tiger or a venomous snake, can use the dangerous powers of this animal or reptile for his own wicked ends. Naturally the "power" is seated particularly in those parts of the animal's body where the vital power is concentrated, above all in the skin, the claws, and the teeth.

The African negro chief, who clothes himself in the skin of a lion or leopard, or wears a collar made of the teeth of these animals as an "embellishment" or a mark of his distinction, believes at the same time that by means of this outfit, he has considerably enhanced the "power" with which he is endowed by nature. Similarly, the collars and necklaces of jaguar's teeth worn among many tribes of tropical South America, are not embellishments or ornaments in the common sense of the word, but are amulets which protect their wearer against evil influences and give the warrior something of the power and courage of the jaguar. The head-ornaments of eagle feathers worn formerly by the Indian chiefs in North America, evidently had a similar magical significance.

I have mentioned before that in the mountain regions of Peru and Bolivia, a "man-tiger" is called *uturúncu* by the Quichua-speaking Indians. It is a highly "magical" animal. The fat of the *uturúncu*, for instance, is sold by the Indians at the market-places as a very powerful medicine for the cure of rheumatism and many other ailments. [45] In Peru, the same wonderful efficacy is commonly ascribed to the tallow of the llama, which, from time immemorial, has been regarded by the

Indians as a sacred animal on account of its supposed faculty of receiving the souls of the dead. I have also mentioned the rattlesnake as a sacred reptile among the Cherokee Indians in North America. If, in spite of the reverence paid to this reptile, the Indians sometimes kill it, they do so among other things, because they much appreciate as medicines the rattle, the fangs, and the fat of the rattlesnake. [46]

Instances of this kind could be mentioned almost indefinitely. In addition to the numerous plant medicines, they undoubtedly illustrate in an interesting way the line of thought on which the primitive conception of magical "power" is based.

I shall have the opportunity to return to animal worship among the lower religions in connection with totemism, frequently referred to in this chapter. From the above statements one sees clearly that animal worship by no means coincides with totemism, as asserted by some historians of primitive religion. The totems, however, are not only animals but also plants, in fact, even inanimate objects of nature. It is convenient, therefore, to treat of this form of religion only after certain other aspects of the primitive view called animism have been examined.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WORSHIP OF PLANTS

**I**N setting forth his well-known theory about the plant soul being merely a lower form of the psychical life found in animals and man, Aristotle expressed a view which was evidently universal in antiquity which, on the whole, is shared by all primitive peoples of the present time.

As for the latter, however, it is doubtful whether uncivilized peoples really do believe that the plant soul represents a psychical life of lower degree than that found in animals and men. On the contrary the worship of trees and plants, so common among such peoples, shows that the plant spirits, who in most cases are probably identical with, or have been developed out of the souls animating men, are often raised to the rank of real divinities by primitive peoples.

Just as animal worship has a purely animistic origin, so the worship of plants is intimately connected with the belief in souls animating trees and plants. In essence, this plant soul seems to be the same as the soul or spirit animating man. Frequently the belief even appears that the souls of deceased persons transmigrate into certain trees. The primitive theory of reincarnation refers, therefore, not only to animals, but also to trees and plants. Such a view is by no means incomprehensible. Scarcely to a less degree than animals, plants offer characteristics which to an undeveloped mind tend to make them appear as conscious beings, living a life similar to that of man himself. Like man, the plants grow up, flourish, and fall into decay; at regular intervals they dress themselves in green and again shed their leaves; they produce fruits and flowers which excite the wonder of uncivilized man. Swayed by the breeze or smitten by the storm, the tree is never at rest. Murmurs are heard in its foliage, its branches creak and writhe as in agony; sounds issue from the gaunt stem or hollow trunk. Observations of this kind have induced even the highly cultured peoples of antiquity to pay religious reverence to

trees and plants, while among most uncultured peoples of our own time, this form of primitive nature worship is most marked.

This may be said, for instance, of the peoples of the New World. In North America, the tree spirits generally seem to be conceived as human souls, or at any rate as spirits of the same kind as those animating the human body. In some cases there is even the idea of a direct transmigration of human souls into trees. In a report of the British Association on the north-western tribes of Canada we are thus told that "trees are considered transformed men. The creaking of the limbs is their voice." [1] This belief, for instance, is held of the cedar, which to many North American tribes is sacred. So is it with the Cherokee, who regard the cedar, although not a totem, with the same superstition as that with which they regard certain animals.

The small green twigs are burnt as incense in certain ceremonies, especially to counteract the effect of evil dreams; they think that the malicious demons who cause such dreams cannot endure the smell of burning cedar. But the wood itself is considered too sacred to be used as fuel. "According to a myth, the red tinge of the wood comes originally from the blood of a wicked magician, whose severed head was hung on the top of a tall cedar." [2] From this we may infer that the spirit or soul which the Cherokee believe animates the cedar, is identical with the soul of a magician, and that the *mana* or supernatural power ascribed to the wood, twigs, and other parts of the tree proceeds from this soul. When a human soul, and, in particular, the soul of a medicine-man and sorcerer, is supposed to be incarnated in an animal or plant, certain parts of that animal or plant are thought to possess mysterious magical properties. In full accord with this view, for instance, the tribes of North-West America always make the insignia or magical crests of the secret societies of the bark of cedar, "carefully prepared and dyed red by means of maple bark. It may be said that the secrets are vested in these ornaments of red cedar bark, and wherever these ornaments are found on the north-west coast, secret societies occur." [3] The Iroquois believed that each species of tree, shrub, plant, and herb had its own spirit, and to these spirits they used to return thanks. [4]

Among the Indians of South America I myself have shown numerous traces of a plant worship. Nowhere, it seems to me, do their ideas about the spirits inhabiting trees and plants appear in a more typical form than among the Jibaros and Canelos Indians in Western Amazonas, whom I have studied myself. One tenet in the animistic philosophy of these Indians is that trees and plants have their spirits and souls just like men and animals. According to the mythology of the Jibaros, as we have seen, "all animals have once been men", and although there is no similar myth in regard to plants, their whole animism rests on the belief that even the plants are in a sense human. This belief implies that the spirits that animate them are the same as those animating the human body, and they may once more, either for a longer period or only casually, take human form. The Jibaros speak to the plants as if they were endowed with human thought and feelings. Moreover, when intoxicated by the narcotic drinks prepared from certain vines and herbs, the Jibaro Indian declares that he sees the spirits of these plants in a definite human form, namely, as one of his remote ancestors. Sex even is attributed to each kind of tree or plant. Some are supposed to be men, *i.e.* to have a man's *wakani* or soul, others are said to be women, *i.e.* to have a woman's soul. This view is also seen in the custom of giving the children the names of trees and plants. Male children take those thought of as masculine, and female children those thought of as feminine.

The growth of trees and plants and the ripening of their fruits are said to be due to the *wakani* or soul inhabiting them. As to their significance in the practical religion or superstition of the Indians, the same holds true as of animals: marked attention is paid to trees and plants with special alimentary properties, or to those distinguished by certain striking characteristics.

The worship of garden crops and medical plants will be mentioned later. Among trees looked upon as "sacred" or important from a religious point of view, the palm is of special interest. There are numerous kinds of palms in South America as we know. Many of them are extremely useful to the Indians because of their fruits, and other materials, or from various other points of view. As to fruit, the *chontaruru* or cultivated chonta palm (*Guilielma* sp.) is the most noted. Its excellent

fruits provide the most appreciated food of the Indians for a couple of months in the year, and still more appreciated, perhaps, is the fermented drink which they make from them. The chontaruru palm has a man's *wakani*, or soul, and is therefore planted and tended by the men. At the time of the year when the fruits ripen, great festivals are held in connection with the preparation of the drink and the actual ceremony. Dances are performed and incantations sung with a view to "speeding the ripening and increase of the fruits and the fermentation of the drink."

On the other hand the chonta palm, both the cultivated and the wild species (*Bactris*, *Iriartea*), is also regarded as a demonic tree because of the large thorns which play an important part in Indian sorcery. Among the tribes of the Amazonas territory the medicine-men make frequent use of chonta thorns for the purpose of bewitching their enemies. The Quichua-speaking Indians of the Upper Amazonas therefore call the arrow of the sorcerer *chunta*, and an Indian practising nefarious magic *chunta shitac runa*, i.e. "a *chunta*-throwing man. From this point of view the spirit of the chonta palm is an evil demon, called *iguanchi* by the Jibaros and *supai* by the Quichua-speaking Indians. This is due in part to the iron-hard wood of this palm, which is used likewise for magical ends.

Other trees which have a place in the religion and superstition of the Indians of the Amazonas, are the genipa tree (*Genipa americana*), the guayusa tree (*Ilex* sp.), and the shrub *Bixa orellana*. All these trees play a great part in the magic of the Indians. From the genipa fruit they get the black dye with which they paint their body and face for warfare and for certain ceremonial occasions, and from the *Bixa orellana*, the red paint to which no less wonderful magical effects are ascribed. The red painting is regarded by the Indians as a protection against disease and witchcraft; it gives the body strength and power of resistance; it gives good luck in hunting, in love, etc. These effects are due to the spirits animating the trees and the shrub. It may be of interest to add that the former is regarded by the Indians as a "man", the latter as a "woman". [5]

The essential identity supposed to exist between the plant souls and the animal and the human souls, is seen, for instance, in what Professor Preuss tells us about the religious and

mythological ideas of the Uitóto in Colombia. In the Uitóto myths, says Preuss, it is a common feature for animals and plants to appear as men. Often, in fact, it is difficult to say whether or not the tribes bearing animal and plant names are meant to represent human tribes; there is absolutely no distinction drawn between them and men, and sometimes even they are denoted as ancestors. [6] Dr. Koch-Grünberg likewise states of some Arawak tribes in Guiana that the personification of animals and plants, a characteristic feature of their mythology, is founded on a general theory of the animation (*Beseelung*) of nature. Just as every animal has a soul, so "all plants are animate, for they grow and die." Koch-Grünberg adds that plants appear only seldom as speaking and acting independently, and that those which do are mostly magical plants, used by hunters and fishers and for the cure of disease. Such personified medical plants appear as the most powerful assistants of the medicine-men at the cure. They are "like men", "like the shadows or souls of the trees." [7] These instances are typical of the ideas held of trees by the Indians of tropical South America.

Many similar instances could be quoted from Africa. The silk-cotton tree, for example, which reaches an enormous height, far out-topping all the other trees of the forest, is regarded with reverence throughout West Africa from the Senegal to the Niger, and is believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. Among the Ewe-speaking peoples of the Slave Coast, the indwelling god of this giant of the forest goes by the name of Huntin. Trees in which he dwells specially are surrounded by a girdle of palm-leaves. Sacrifices of fowls, and occasionally of human beings, are fastened to the trunk or laid against the foot of the tree. A tree distinguished by such a girdle may not be cut down or injured in any way. To omit the sacrifice is an offence punishable by death. The negroes of Congo set calabashes of palm-wine at the foot of certain trees for these to drink when thirsty. [8] The Wanika of Eastern Africa honour specially the spirits of coco-nut palms in return for the many benefits conferred upon them by the trees. To cut down a coco-nut palm is an inexpiable offence, equivalent to matricide. Sacrifices to the trees are made on many occasions. [9]

Tree worship also flourishes among the natives of the Malay

Archipelago, in the South Sea Islands, and in Australia. Among the Malays, the trees are so great an object of religious reverence that after the building of a house, which necessitates violent treatment of trees, the builders subject themselves to penance for a whole year, observing certain rules of abstinence in their mode of life. Special regard is shown to the souls of the camphor and the *upas* trees (*Antiaris toxicaria*), the latter being the one from which they procure their dreadful arrow-poison. If this tree is felled, penalty has to be paid. The Malays dare not even mention the tree by its true name but say of the camphor-tree, for instance, "the tree the contents of which smell so badly", and of the *upas* tree, "the tree the poison of which is so bitter that it kills animals." The trees are supposed to feel wounds, they "bleed" when they are hit by the axe, and since they are thus thought to have human feelings, the natives apologize to them when they cut them down. [10]

The Dieri in Central Australia look upon certain trees as particularly sacred because they regard them as the departed ancestors of the blacks who have taken the shape of trees. They speak, therefore, with reverence of these trees and take care not to fell or burn them. If a white man should ask them to cut them they seriously protest, assuring him that if they did, they would lose their luck and be punished because they had not protected their ancestors. [11] When the Tagalogs of the Philippines wish to pluck a flower, they ask leave of the genius (*nono*) of the flower to do so; when they have to cut down a tree they beg pardon of the genius of the tree and excuse themselves by saying that it was the priest who bade them fell it. [12]

Plant worship, moreover, was a characteristic feature of the religion of the Finno-Ugrian tribes. For the most part trees were worshipped in sacred groves. Among the Russian tribes these were always enclosed with a fence, while among the Siberian tribes they were not clearly distinguishable from surrounding trees. The Votyaks, belonging to the Permian stock, called these sacred groves by the name *lud*, also the name of the spirit residing in this place. No woman or child was allowed to enter within the sacred enclosure, and even the men entered there only for the purpose of performing the necessary religious rites. No bough could be broken in this grove, no noise made, and

no game that had taken refuge there could be killed. Whoever did so, was sure to be punished in some way by the local spirit, generally by some disease. [13] Although the whole grove had its tutelary spirit it is clear that this is a later belief and that originally every tree was thought to be inhabited by a spirit of its own. In fact, a Russian writer, Haruzin, expressly relates that each Votyak had his own particular tree within the *lud*-grove which he worshipped. [14]

That forest trees in general are animated by spirits who were originally human souls, is a belief occurring among most Finnish peoples. According to the belief of the Tsheremisses, for instance, each tree has its soul *ört*, and all tree-spirits were originally men. The Tscheremisses think that the souls of those who die in the forest become forest-spirits. [15] These disembodied human souls seem to be identical with the souls (*ört*) of the trees, but it is not quite clear how they think these two kinds of spirit can be related. The theory of the transmigration of souls, as I have stated before, does not appear among the Finnish tribes as typically as among many other peoples. To what extent the spirits of the dead people the spiritual world of tribes belonging to the Finno-Ugrian stock, will appear with further detail in the subsequent chapter.

The tree worship flourishing among the ancient Aryan race in Europe is so well known and has been so elaborately dealt with by Mannhardt and J. G. Frazer, that it need only be hinted at here. Sir James Frazer rightly points out that the important rôle tree worship played among the inhabitants of primeval Europe, is quite natural considering that, at the dawn of history, Europe was covered with immense virgin forests in which the scattered clearings must have seemed like islets in an ocean of green. Specially characteristic was the tree cult of the Celts, when the Druids performed their sacred rites under enormous old oaks or in groves of oaks. Also well known is the sacred grove at Upsala in Sweden where every tree was regarded as divine. Similarly the ancient Slavs worshipped trees and groves. [16] In general, the worship of sacred groves among the different peoples of the Aryan race in Europe is as prominent as among the Finno-Ugrian tribes, but there is no reason, of course, to assume that the latter have been influenced by the Aryans.

tells us that after Theseus had slain her father, she concealed herself in the wood where, in her distress, she devotedly prayed to the trees and bushes for protection. [25] That the same belief lingered on among the lower population even in post-classical times, may be inferred from passages from early Christian writers, where it is stated that the heathen Greeks worshipped trees and other lifeless things, "considering them as gods." [26]

Whether the worshipped tree-spirit is the very soul of the tree related to it in the same way as the human soul and body are related, or whether it is another spirit which for some reason or another has taken up its abode in there, is difficult to decide in each special case. Clearly, however, the latter idea marks a more advanced stage in the evolution of religious thought. Animism has been developed into fetishism or—as far as the tree-spirit is conceived as a personal being—into polytheism even. The tree-nymphs of Greek mythology are instances of these personal tree-spirits. At this stage there is a looser connection between the tree-spirit and the individual tree; it may become a deity or demon of the vegetation, no longer bound to a particular tree, but ruler over the vegetation in general. Abstractions of this kind are the Earth-mothers appearing in certain higher religions, and those Maize-mothers and Rice-mothers familiar, for instance, in the lower cultures of America and India and with whom I shall presently deal.

Remarkable powers are often ascribed to these tree-gods or -demons, and their influence is by no means always limited to promoting the fertility of the vegetation. It is easy to understand that they are believed in some cases to send rain and sunshine, since the growth of plants is dependent on water and warmth. When the missionary Jerome of Prague was persuading the heathen Lithuanians to fell their sacred groves, a multitude of women besought the Prince of Lithuania to stop him. With the wood, they said, he was destroying the house of god from which they were used to getting rain and sunshine. [27] The Mundaris in Assam think that if a tree in the sacred grove is felled, the sylvan gods evince their displeasure by withholding rain. [28] When Ovambo women go out to sow corn they take in the basket of seed, two green branches of a particular kind of tree. One they plant in the field together with the first seed sown. This is believed to have the power of attracting rain;

hence it is called by the name "rain-bush" in one of the native dialects. [29]

Closely connected with this idea is the belief that tree-spirits make crops grow. Among the Mundaris, every village has its sacred grove, and "the grove deities are held responsible for the crops and are especially honoured at all the great agricultural festivals." [30] The negroes of the Gold Coast practise the custom of sacrificing at the foot of certain tall trees. They think that if one of these were felled, all the fruits of the earth would perish. [31] The tree-spirit also makes the herds to multiply and blesses women with offspring. In Northern India, for instance, the *Emblica officinalis* is a sacred tree in this sense. On the eleventh of the month Phalgun (February) libations are poured at its foot, a red or yellow string is bound round the trunk, and prayers are offered to it for the fruitfulness of women, animals, and crops. Again, in Northern India the coco-nut is esteemed one of the most sacred fruits and is called Sripala, or the fruit of Sri, the goddess of prosperity. It is the symbol of fertility, and all through Upper India is kept in shrines and presented by the priests to women who desire to become mothers. [32]

It is interesting to note the occurrence of similar ideas in modern European folklore. In many parts of Germany and Scandinavia, for instance, the May-tree or May-pole is apparently supposed to exert a beneficial influence over both women and cattle. On the first of May in Swabia and certain parts of German Austria the peasants set up May-trees and May-bushes at the doors of stables and byres, one for each horse and cow; they believe this will make the cows yield much milk. [33] The power attributed to the tree or tree-spirit is seen also from the German custom of the Harvest-May. A large branch or a whole tree is decked with ears of corn, brought home on the last waggon from the harvest-field and fastened on the roof of the farmhouse or of the barn. Here it remains for a year. As Mannhardt has shown, the branch embodies the tree-spirit conceived as the spirit of vegetation in general. Its vivifying and fructifying influence is thus brought to bear on the corn in particular. Hence in Swabia, the Harvest-May is fastened among the last stalks of corn left standing on the field; in other places it is planted on the corn-field and the last sheaf cut is attached to its trunk. The Harvest-May of Germany had its counterpart in

the *eiresione* of ancient Greece. A branch of olive or laurel was bound about with ribbons and hung with a variety of fruits. The *eiresione* was carried in procession at a harvest festival and was fastened over the door of the house, where it remained for a year. [34]

In modern Scandinavia the same idea survives in connection with many popular customs and festivals. The May-tree, for example, is full of mysterious power, identical with the vital power of the tree, or proceeding from the spirit animating it. The same may be said of the tutelary tree (*vårdträdet*), generally a linden or an ash, which stands in the middle of the yard and is regarded as a protector of the house and the people in it. The Scandinavian tutelary tree is doubtless a remnant of the sacred grove formerly worshipped, but, up to recent times, it has itself been looked upon as filled with supernatural powers and been the object of a real cult. Every Thursday, or at least at Christmas, ale was poured at its roots by the Swedish peasant, and prayers were addressed to it. Pregnant women embraced its stem and believed thus to secure an easy birth. Some have explained the power of the tree by the presence of good fairies who protected the house and were supposed to dwell in the tree, but this must be a later idea. [35] In the Scandinavian tutelary tree we no doubt have a remnant of the old Aryan tree cult, resting on the belief that actual spirits or souls animated the trees. The soul of the tree is that which makes it live and grow, but the power in its wood, bark, boughs, leaves, fruits, etc., is generally conceived impersonally. In the same way, in their ideas of the Supernatural, primitive peoples frequently hover between the personal and the impersonal.

The mysterious connection thought by primitive peoples to exist between fertility in nature and fecundity in the human world, is illustrated in an interesting way by some mysteries of the South American Indians. These feasts take place at the time when the fruits of certain palms, important economically, grow ripe, and thus take on the character of harvest feasts. At the same time, however, they are associated with marriage ceremonies and sexual orgies, as well as with drinking-bouts and mask-dances, a fact which gives them a very odd character. Taken as a whole, these mystery feasts rest on the idea that the palms are animated by human spirits which, during the sexual orgies, and under the influence of the mask-dances and other

conjurations, are induced to enter into the women and make them prolific. At the same time as fruitfulness is thus promoted in the human world, the useful plants, or their spirits, are also propagated. The Yurupary mysteries of the Uaupés Indians of North-west Brazil belong to the same category. They throw an interesting light on the primitive idea of conception, but at the same time point to the unbridgeable chasm which separates the primitive manner of thought from that of civilized man. [36]

The above instances may be sufficient to illustrate the worship of trees in the lower culture. Of still greater interest is the worship of cultivated plants. It is natural that the earth, which produces useful fruits for the sustenance of mankind, should be likened unto a woman bearing children and regarded as a "Mother". Thus the notion of a Corn-mother or Corn-maiden which one meets not only in North and South America and Africa, but also in different parts of Europe, especially among Aryan peoples. There is, too, the idea of a Rice-mother with India as its special home.

Among North American Indians, the idea of a Corn-mother appears in typical form among the Cherokee, who invoke the Maize-spirit under the name of the Old Woman. Formerly the most solemn ceremony of the tribe was the annual green-corn dance, celebrated as a preliminary to the eating of the new corn. Much ceremony also attended the planting and tending of the maize. When the corn was growing, a priest went into the field with the owner and built a small enclosure in the middle of it. There sat the two on the ground, the priest, rattle in hand, singing songs of invocation to the spirit of the corn. [37]

In South America there are very few traces of a cult of the corn spirit east of the Andes. In fact, apart from the beliefs of the Jibaros and the Canelos Indians, to be mentioned again presently, there are indirect evidences only of such a cult. This is probably due merely to lack of information.

After describing the magical ceremonies with which the Xingu tribes try to propitiate the slaughtered game and certain large fishes caught, in order to make them suitable for food, the German explorer, von den Steinen, makes the significant additional statement that "the same system is extended to certain fruits, the *piki*, the *mangoven*, and the maize, the most delicious. [38]

This implies that these plants are believed to be animated by spirits, the souls of departed Indians, and that their fruits, therefore, cannot be eaten without danger until they have been "blessed" by a sorcerer.

Instances exist which show that such ideas are not limited to the Xingu Indians, but are commonly held by tribes where agriculture has attained a higher importance. The most important of the garden crops in tropical South America is the manioc, and among some tribes, at least, special manioc-feasts are celebrated, founded on the idea of a spirit animating the plant. This may be said, for instance, of the manioc-feast or *okima* of the Uitoto Indians. In some details its character is obscure but the general aim is to effect an abundant crop of maize. [39] The manioc-feast among certain Ecuadorian Indians has the same object. I have already mentioned the animistic ideas about trees and plants held by the Jibaros and Canelos Indians of Eastern Ecuador. I have also pointed out that these Indians go so far as to attribute a sex to each kind of tree or plant. Big and hard species of trees and plants with specially strong properties are regarded as "men". On the other hand, most, although not all, of the garden plants are regarded as "women". The most important of the "female" plants are the manioc, the batata or sweet potato (*Convolvulus batatas*), the carrot (*Daucus carota*), the bean, the earth-nut, and the pumpkin, whereas the plantain and the maize are the only garden plants regarded as "men". This distinction in regard to sex in plants seems to be due to certain associations of ideas suggested by their outward appearance or properties, but it is difficult to follow the train of thought of the savage in this respect.

The cultivation of plants looked upon as feminine naturally falls to the lot of the women, whereas the cultivation of the plantain and the maize, regarded as masculine, is one of men's particular obligations. Elaborate ceremonies are observed at sowing and planting, especially at the setting of the manioc sticks, during which the women appeal for an abundant crop both to the great Earth-mother Nungui herself and to the individual manioc-spirits (*tsanimba wakani*). A detailed account of these ceremonies is out of place here. It is enough to state that one of the greatest feasts of the Jibaros, the "feast of the women", has reference particularly to the manioc and other garden plants. The object is to secure a rich harvest. Taken as a whole, the

ideas and customs of the Jibaros relating to agriculture may at least be said to be typical of the tribes in the Amazonian territory. [40] They throw an interesting light on the origin of the division of labour in regard to agriculture.

In an equally clear manner the Indian conception of the corn-spirit and other plant-spirits is seen in certain superstitious practices of the ancient Peruvians. According to their idea, all edible fruits and plants were animated by spirits who caused their growth. The most important of these plants were the maize, the quinoa (*Quenopodium quinoa*), the coca, and the potato. Female sex was ascribed to these plants, and the divine beings accordingly called the Maize-mother, the Quinoa-mother, the Coca-mother, and the Potato-mother. Figures of these divine mothers were made respectively of the ears of maize and the leaves of the quinoa and coca plants; they were dressed in women's clothes and in a sense worshipped because they were thought to stand in a mysterious relation to the different cereals and root fruits they represented. The Maize-mother, for instance, in her capacity of mother, was believed to have the power of producing and giving birth to much maize. In the same way the Quinoa-, Coca-, and Potato-mothers would abundantly produce quiboa, coca, and potatoes. [41]

Very elaborate also were the ceremonies performed in ancient Mexico in honour of the maize goddess Chicomecoatele. The Mexican cult of the maize-spirit bears a great similarity to the corresponding cult of the ancient Peruvians and need not therefore be dealt with here.

Again, among the Malay tribes of East India the Rice-mother plays an important rôle. The Malays are convinced that rice has a soul very similar to the human soul. They therefore pay the greatest reverence to this plant. They treat the flowering rice with the same consideration as a pregnant woman. They abstain from firing shots or making a noise in the fields for fear of frightening the soul of the rice and thus causing it to miscarry, and produce no seeds. Both before sowing and while the plant is growing, the Malay tries to propitiate the soul of the rice by frequent offerings, so that the harvest may be abundant. The natives also make sacrifices and direct prayers to the great spirit of agriculture, Amei Avi, but the rice has a soul of its own which must be propitiated. [42]

The Aryan Earth-mother in Europe is well known through

the detailed researches of Mannhardt and J. G. Frazer. [43] In Germany the corn used to be personified under the name of the Corn-mother, but there are also ideas about a Rye-mother and a Pea-mother. These are analogous to Demeter, the Barley-mother or Corn-mother of the ancient Greeks. Among the Teutons the belief in a spirit animating the growing corn and making it fertile, gave rise to a number of peculiar agricultural and harvest rites. In German countries these have survived right up to our own day, although the ideas originally underlying them have been partly lost. It is interesting to note that, in these agricultural rites, the idea of a personal corn-spirit and of an impersonal power of fertilization, alternate with, or pass into one another in such a way, that in many cases it is impossible strictly to distinguish them. Obviously, however, the impersonal "power", a hypostasis, as it were, of the vegetative power of the individual ears of corn, is a later idea founded on the earlier belief in individual souls animating the corn. To assume, as has been done, [44] that the "power" is the primary notion and the personal spirit a secondary notion, implies that the evolution of thought has been from the abstract to the concrete, which is contrary to primitive psychology. Be that as it may, the vegetative "power" of the field, or the demon of the vegetation, is supposed to be concentrated in the last sheaf or ears, where it takes refuge in trying to escape the scythe of the harvester. Then it frequently takes the shape of a human being or of an animal, a buck, a goat, a cat, a hare or a horse. Since the fleeing corn-demon is believed to be present particularly in the last sheaf, it is supposed to be very dangerous to cut or tie it. The person who does so will have to suffer some misfortune or bad luck, he is exposed to the merciless fun of his comrades, and so forth. [45]

It is seen, from my short survey, that plant worship is fairly uniformly spread among the lower peoples and that, although originally purely animistic in character, it shows among certain more civilized peoples, forms which perhaps belong rather to the polytheistic stage in the evolution of religion. The primitive plant-spirit becomes an anthropomorphic deity of vegetation with a comparatively wide sphere of activity.

But before leaving this form of primitive religion, we still have to say a few words about the interesting way the ideas of the lower peoples about plant-spirits are applied to their magic.

Just as the magical power inherent in certain parts of the animal body is due to the soul or vital power concentrated in them, so we meet with a similar belief in regard to plants. In the magical medicine of the lower peoples in general, plants are far more prominent than animals. Those writers, however, who have dealt with this class of ideas and customs have never discovered the source of the mysterious power or *mana* commonly ascribed by primitive peoples to the plants used in their magical and medical art.

Among many tribes in different parts of the world intoxicating and narcotic drinks prepared from certain fruits and plants, play a most important part in the religious and social life. Well known, for instance, is the national drink of the Polynesians, *kava*, prepared from the root of the plant *Piper methysticum*. The root is chewed and spat out in a gourd which is subsequently filled with water. Again, the palm-wine of the African negroes is prepared from the juice of the sprout or stem of the cocoa-palm. Both these drinks are "sacred" and considered indispensable on certain important occasions. It is stated of the *kava*, that in certain parts of Polynesia the ceremonies at its preparation and distribution have developed into a ritual so detailed and important that they amount to a real sacrament. As far as I know, however, the ideas which the Polynesians associate with their *kava* and the negroes with their palm-wine have never been more closely investigated. [46] On the other hand, I myself have studied in detail similar ideas and customs among the South American Indians.

That the drinking-bouts of the Indians often have a ceremonial character and a magical significance, has been pointed out by K. T. Preuss with special reference to the peoples of Mexico, notably the Tarahumara. Dr. Preuss is quite right in stating that intoxicating liquors are drunk primarily with a view to increasing the natural magical power (*Zauberkraft*) of the body. [47] But when he assumes that this power has nothing to do with spirits but must be explained according to pre-animistic principles, I cannot agree with him. On the contrary, I think the magic of the intoxicating and narcotic drinks provides an excellent instance of a supernatural power or *mana* which is clearly of animistic origin.

In the sub-tropical Gran Chaco, for instance, the Indians brew intoxicating drinks from the algaroba-tree (*Prosopis alba*)

and certain other fruits. These trees are believed to be animated by "good spirits" and it is the power of these spirits which is present in the fermented drinks. The fermentation, which is brought about everywhere in South America by masticating the fruit and mixing it well with saliva, is a mysterious process to the Indian mind and is hastened by various ceremonies, such as the beating of drums and the shaking of rattles. By these, the spirit is favourably influenced for the desired end. Moreover, when the Indian is intoxicated he says that he has been possessed by the "good spirit", which will give him strength and the power to resist every kind of evil influence. Hence every incident in the life of the family and the community, birth and death, marriage, warfare, and so on, is celebrated by a drinking-bout. [48]

In tropical South America, the most important sacred beer is brewed from the manioc root prepared in exactly the same way as the algaroba-beer among the Chaco Indians, but of even more importance from a religious point of view. Thus, too, the *paiwari* of the Guiana and the *kaschiri* of the Brazilian Indians, two beverages indispensable at the religious feasts and especially at the death-feasts, are prepared from the manioc root. Again, the general object of these drinking-bouts is to enhance the natural magical power of the body on occasions when such power is more necessary than others. Nowhere is this idea seen more conspicuously than among the Jibaro Indians of Eastern Ecuador. At their great victory-feast, celebrated on the capture of an enemy's head, every important ceremony ends with the general drinking of a strong manioc-beer, while, at the end of the whole feast, a species of manioc-wine, prepared with special care, is consumed ceremonially by the warriors. They believe that without the drinking of this sacred liquor, the object of the feast would not be attained. [49]

That a person intoxicated by a fermented drink is thought to enter into intimate relation with the spiritual world is a natural primitive idea. Like all abnormal or unusual states of mind, the very state of exaltation is explained by the savage according to his "possession" theory. The fact that fermentation is achieved by mixing the fruit with saliva, is also significant. The saliva, which shares the natural magical power of the whole body, is supposed to influence favourably the spirit active in the drink.

These statements about intoxicating drinks apply also to narcotics in the strict sense of the word and to "medical" plants. Narcotic drinks prepared from certain plants with poisonous properties, and thus able to produce visions, hallucinations, and a state of ecstasy, are used in tropical South America and are particularly interesting from a religious point of view.

Among these plants, tobacco holds pride of place. Long before the white man arrived in the New World the tobacco plant was cultivated in both continents and used by the Indians both as a magical medicine and as a means of expelling evil spirits. Only through European influence do some Indians of our own days smoke tobacco for pleasure. The original ceremonial use of this plant can still be studied among the Indians of the Upper Amazonas at least. The Jibaros, for instance, fancy that the tobacco spirit (*tsangu wakani*) is a masculine being; only the men, therefore, may cultivate the plant. But, once prepared, as is so with most medicines of this kind, it can be administered to women as well as men. Tobacco is taken mostly in liquid form, the leaves being either boiled in water or chewed in the mouth and mixed with saliva. When used at the great feasts, the medicine is always prepared with saliva. This is thought to enhance its magical effects. Sometimes big cigars are made of the leaves and the person in whose honour the feast is held, gets the smoke blown into his mouth by an old man. The Jibaros use tobacco in this way at the "tobacco-smoking feast", with which a youth is initiated into manhood.

The tobacco medicine is given to women in liquid form, notably at the feast called the "tobacco-feast of the women", held when a young girl is about to marry. Long before the feast proper is held, at the time when the fields of manioc, plantain, sweet potatoes, beans, etc., are being prepared for the new household, the woman has to partake of the wonderful medicine to promote her growth. At the feast it is ceremonially administered to her in varying doses by an old woman. The general idea associated with the tobacco-feast, is to give to the future housewife strength and ability for the various domestic duties incumbent on the married Jibaro woman. The spirit of tobacco will take entire possession of her and fill her with a mysterious power, not only for the moment, but for many years to come. This power will, automatically, as it were, be trans-

ferred to all departments of her activity. Through her person the spirit will exert a favourable influence on the crops, causing the plantations to grow rapidly and bear fruits abundantly; also on the domestic animals, the swine and the fowls, confided to her care, so that they become fat and increase in number. The woman will also be able to serve her husband well and to educate her children properly. All this is effected by the tobacco or, more strictly speaking, by the spirit of the plant, which is imbued with a mysterious influence through the ceremonies of the feast.

Further, tobacco, among most tribes of the Amazonas, is the special medicine of the professional medicine-men and sorcerers. When a Jibaro wants to become a medicine-man he has to fast strictly, but at the same time is obliged to take tobacco-juice in great quantities. When about to cure a patient he begins his treatment by draining a large dish of tobacco-water, and the spirit of tobacco is invoked to assist him. [50]

Among other magical medicines obtained from the plant world two narcotics which play a prominent rôle in native divination, call for special mention. One is prepared from the vine *Banisteria caapi*, belonging to the family *Malpighiaceæ*. The Jibaros call it *natéma*, but in Ecuador it is best known under its Quichua name *ayahuasca*. The plant is also found at the River Uaupés and its tributaries in North-west Brazil, at the cataracts of the Orinoco, as well as in the Amazonian parts of Columbia. It is used everywhere by the natives in much the same way, namely, for the purpose of divination. The Brazilian Indians prepare the drink without boiling the plant. A piece of the stem is beaten in a mortar with water. When sufficiently steeped it is passed through a sieve which separates the woody fibre. Enough water is then added to the residue to make it drinkable. The Indians of Ecuador boil it for one or more hours, adding as well juice of tobacco and several other vegetable ingredients to enhance the narcotic effects of the drink. Another narcotic used by the Indians in these regions is prepared from the rind of the bush *Datura arborea*, of the family *Solanaceæ*. It is best known under its Quichua name *huantuc*. The rind is not boiled. The essence is simply pressed out with the hands and taken by sorcerers and warriors as a medicine, with a view to pro-

voking a state of ecstasy and divinatory dreams. This narcotic is even stronger than the one prepared from the vine *Banisteria*.

Here one is particularly interested in the religious ideas connected with these narcotics. The strange mental conditions they provoke, including all sorts of visions and hallucinations, are ascribed by the Indians to the demons animating the plants. With these, when intoxicated, the Indians are supposed to enter into intimate relation. The demons, moreover, prove to be nothing but ancestral spirits or souls which in some way have been transmitted to the plants. In narcotic sleep they appear to the Indians in hideous forms, such as tigers, anacondas or giant snakes, crocodiles, eagles, etc. They speak to the dreamer with a human voice, give him advice, and reveal future events. The Jibaros call these demons *arútama*, the "Old Ones". They are the ancestors of the Indians and were once great warriors. Only that Jibaro man who has seen "the Old Ones" in dreams, and been spoken to by them, can hope to become a successful warrior. The medicine-men and wizards seek especially the assistance of these demons, because otherwise they will be unable to carry out their functions of curing or sending disease by witchcraft. [51]

I include also among the magical "medicines" of the Indians, the word "medicine", of course, being used here in a broad sense, the one used by the Indians of South America for poisoning their arrows. The most famous of the arrow-poisons is that known by its Macusi name *curare* or *ourali*, specially common to Guiana, but used also in a somewhat different form by the Indians of Western Amazonas. Certain *Strychnos* species form perhaps its main ingredient, but it also contains several other vegetable ingredients, all apparently poisonous, but most of them still unknown to science. The preparation of the poison is veiled in great mystery and linked up with certain superstitious practices which are much alike all through South America. In Ecuador I myself was given detailed information about the arrow-poison ideas of the Indians.

In each of the plants from which the poison is prepared there resides a spirit or demon to whom the plant owes its poisonous properties. This demon it is who kills the victim when the poisoned arrow penetrates the body. In keeping

with this idea, the Quichua-speaking Canelos Indians call arrow-poison *supai hambi*, "the devil's medicine", *hambi* being the general name for a magical drug. When the cook, a kind of sorcerer, has to prepare the poison, he retires to the forest. Here he must stay, strictly fasting, for several days and nights. The boiling can take place only at night, and while in process the cook sings incantations to the demon of the plants. His whole performance is really a conjuration by which he subdues the demon and "develops" its power for his own purposes. The poisonous gases rising from the boiling pot are regarded as an expression of the anger of the conquered demon, and when, after days of fasting, the cook returns from the forest pale and weak, his condition is attributed to his fight with the superhuman powers. [52]

The arrow-poison used by the natives of Borneo bears many resemblances to the famous curare-poison of the South American Indians. In Borneo the poison is also obtained from the vegetable kingdom; it is prepared by tapping the trunk of certain trees, of which the *Strychnos*-tree is probably the most important. There is little doubt either that the arrow-poison of the Malays is closely associated with their belief in spirits, as it is also with the Indians of South America. As the Swedish explorer E. Mjöberg says, "they believe that everything in nature, even the dangerous poisoned arrows, have a soul which manifests itself in mysterious effects." [53]

It looks as if the same principle applies to all the magical medicines of the lower peoples, namely, that the supernatural power or *mana* which the Indians assume in medical plants is of animistic origin: it proceeds from the "soul" which governs the plant's life and growth.

The same facts I have established, with special reference to certain tribes of Western Amazonas, have been pointed out, for example, by the German explorer Koch-Grünberg in relation to the Indians of Guiana. The medicine-men of the Caraibe and Arawak tribes studied by Koch-Grünberg often avail themselves of certain medical plants when curing disease. The spirits of these plants appear as the assistants of the medicine-men, the magical power inherent in the plants being, in a certain sense, their vivifying element or soul. One of the most important is tobacco, but the same holds true of several other lianas, bushes, and trees of the forest used by

the medicine-men for medical purposes. In some cases the supernatural power acting in these plants seems to be conceived as an impersonal force. In other cases, and I think as a rule, it is conceived as a personal spirit, identical with the plant soul itself. [54] Thus, precisely the same principles we found to apply to certain medicines obtained from the animal world mentioned in the last chapter apply also to the numerous plant medicines used by primitive peoples.

We still have to examine the worship of inanimate objects of nature and the system of magical ideas connected with them.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WORSHIP OF INANIMATE NATURE

TOGETHER with the worship of animals and plants, the worship of sticks and stones and other inanimate objects has always been regarded as a special characteristic of the religious state of the "heathen". However naïve this form of religion may be, we have to establish the fact that historically it has not been limited to primitive or uncivilized peoples, but has appeared, in some of its most typical forms, even in the higher cultures. Thus it was by no means foreign to the civilized peoples of classical antiquity, while in modern folklore the worship of inanimate objects may still be studied as a survival from a time when a scientific conception of nature did not exist.

First of all, one is again confronted here with the question as to what are the ideas on which the worship of inanimate objects of nature is founded. Is a stick or a stone worshipped simply because, in an "animatistic" sense, life, consciousness, and will are ascribed to it, or is it because it is looked upon as the seat of a spirit? As far as its primary form is concerned, [1] Dr. Marett gives the former explanation, whereas the animistic interpretation originates from Tylor. I think modern ethnological research has shown that Tylor's explanation is, on the whole, correct. No doubt Dr. Marett is right in pointing out that, in order to be "deified", an object must appear mysterious in some way to the savage, attract his attention, appeal to his supernatural tendencies through its shape, position, size, or colour, or through some remarkable event with which it is associated.

But on closer investigation we generally find, in addition to this feeling, very concrete ideas at the bottom of the cult surrounding the object. Only by basing his opinion on incomplete observations of passing travellers or on the inaccurate statements of ethnographers would Dr. Marett have traced, in the stone-worship of present-day uncultured peoples, a

pre-animistic stage which in certain cases has been succeeded by an animistic. Consequently, such objects as a solitary pillar of rock, a crumbled volcanic boulder, a meteorite, a pebble of unusual shape, a piece of shining quartz, are not worshipped because, to the savage imagination, as Dr. Marett puts it, they are "invested by the vague but dreadful attributes of Powers." As a rule, a concrete idea is to be found behind the religious veneration shown them. Stone pillars, for instance, are men transformed into stone, a world-wide belief. The soul of a sorcerer has migrated into that particular rock or volcano, or the stone is worshipped because it is regarded as the seat of a spirit or is associated in some way with a spirit. Codrington mentions instances of this kind from Melanesia. Just as, according to him, the magical power, *mana*, always proceeds either from a living man or from the soul or spirit of a dead man, so "a stone is found to have supernatural power because a spirit has associated itself with it." [2]

Innumerable instances of the same kind could be mentioned from South America, where I made extensive inquiries on this point. In the magical practices of the Jibaros, when they sow their fields, for instance, certain small stones of peculiar shape and brown colour play an important part. The women, who do most of the agricultural work, allege to have received these mysterious stones in a dream from the Earth-mother herself, the assistance of whom they never fail to invoke in agriculture. In the stones there is something of the Earth-mother's soul, that soul which also animates plants, and accounts for the wonderful power they possess. The stone of the Earth-mother will promote the growth of the plants and have a beneficial influence on women's domestic work. [3] The same ideas underlie the worship of "lightning-stones", meteorites, stone axes, and other stone implements found in the earth, and about which the Indians of South America hold the same superstitious ideas as other lower peoples. By "lightning-stones" the Jibaros mean small round black stones said to have been hurled down from heaven by a flash of lightning, or, more strictly speaking, by those departed Jibaro warriors whose spirits are believed to be active in thunder and lightning. Their supernatural power is due to their connection with these spirits. Since they proceed from dead warriors, they are believed especially to

bring success in war. Besides which, when kept for a long time, they will help promote the growth of the domestic swine and the fowls. [4]

Just as objects which descend from the heavens are supposed to proceed from spirits and are therefore charged with supernatural power, so the same belief is held of stone-axes and other ancient objects of stone or clay, found in the earth. The Indians ascribe them to their ancestors or to an earlier race of men who once inhabited that place and are jealously guarding their property. The Indians, therefore, consider it very dangerous to dig in old ruins or burial-places. On the other hand, all objects found in such places are believed to possess a wonderful supernatural power which can be used for many different purposes. With their aid sickness can be cured; they bring luck in hunting, fishing, and so forth. [5]

An object thus credited with mysterious power is generally called a *fetish*, a word which plays an important rôle in the modern science of religion. The word itself is of Portuguese origin (*feitico*, from Latin *factius*—*facere* = to do). Originally, the Roman Catholics in Portugal seem to have used it of certain amulets and relics of saints believed to bring luck and to furnish protection against evil. The term received a broader application when it began to be used of certain seemingly insignificant objects charged with supernatural power, stones, pieces of bone, etc., which were the objects of a kind of worship among the negroes of West Africa. The term is supposed to have been introduced into the science of religion by de Brosses, the French historian and President of Parliament. In his work *Du Culte des dieux fetiches*, he used the word to denote a primitive stage of religion particularly characteristic of the negroes. In one of his works Max Müller in fact says that, before 1660, the word is not met with anywhere. The truth seems to be, however, that in early travel books the word "fetish" had been used long before 1660, although de Brosses was the first to introduce it to European science. [6] An English soldier by the name Andrew Battel, who travelled in West Africa in the sixteenth century, mentions in his memoirs, for instance, that the natives in the region of Congo worshipped a "fetish" called Maramba, without, however, giving further information about it. [7] One of the first

descriptions of fetish-worship is given by a Dutch merchantman named Marees in a French work of 1605, in which even pictures of fetishes are shown. [8] In the work of a German writer, O. Dapper, published in 1670, the word "fetish" is often referred to. He says that the negroes have their "fetishes or idols made of wood or green plants which they worship and consult." [9] In the eighteenth century we have notably the works of Bosman and the less known work of the French missionary Loyer. Both point out that it is very difficult to state the real significance of negro fetishes. [10] As a rule, the word was used earlier in a more general sense, to denote a heathen "idol worship" specially peculiar to negroes, [11] whereas modern historians of religion have begun to give it a more limited application, meaning thereby a special primitive form of religion closely related to what is now called animism.

Of earlier works dealing with fetishism, that of de Brosse is almost the only one more generally known. It was probably from him that Comte borrowed the name when, in his *Philosophie positive*, he calls the earliest stage in religious evolution of which we have knowledge, "fetishism". Dr. Haddon, in describing this form of religion in his *Magic and Fetishism*, rightly emphasizes the fact that the word has been much misused. In paying attention to the outward tangible aspect of fetishism, rather than to its spiritual interpretation, many ethnologists and theoretical scholars have defined fetishism simply as the worship of inanimate objects for themselves alone. Fetishism, accordingly, has been said to differ from an idol in that it is worshipped for its own sake and not as the symbol, image, or occasional residence of a deity. [12] This conception of fetishism involves, however, a complete misunderstanding, as is shown by an authority like Ellis. "Every native with whom I have conversed on the subject", he says, "has laughed at the possibility of its being supposed that he could worship or offer sacrifice to some such object as a stone, which of itself it would be perfectly obvious to his senses was a stone only and nothing more." [13] For his own part, Dr. Haddon states that all cases of fetishism, when examined, show that worship is rendered to an intangible power or spirit incorporated in some visible form. Any definition which does not take into account the spiritual force behind the material object is seen to be incomplete and superficial. [14] This

observation of Dr. Haddon's, I think, holds true in regard to the animism of the lower peoples in general.

According to Dr. Haddon's definition of fetishism, any object evidently may become a fetish provided it can attract the attention of the savage in some way. The most essential characteristic of the fetish is that it should possess mysterious power, again the result of its being occasionally or permanently the abode of a spiritual being. A strange spirit may be centred in the fetish or work through it from outside. The connection, therefore, between the material object and the spirit can be an entirely loose one. [15]

The obvious consequence is that, in many cases, no sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between animism and fetishism. Tylor defines fetishism as a special form of animism and includes it in the worship of sticks and stones; to him it is "the doctrine of spirits embodied in, or conveying influence through, certain material objects." He points out that it then passes by an imperceptible gradation into idolatry. Taking into consideration the fact that Tylor himself and most of his epigones overlooked the intimate relation between animism and magic, we are forced still more to the conclusion that the distinction between the fetish and objects looked upon in a more general sense as "animate" is in fact very subtle if not wholly non-existent. Upon the whole, we may agree with Dr. Haddon when he sees this difference that "animism sees all things animated by spirits", while "fetishism sees a spirit incorporated in an individual object." The same writer goes on to state that "the spirit which is believed to occupy the fetish is a different conception from the spirit of the animistic theory; it is not the soul or vital power belonging to the object, and inherent in it, from which the virtue is derived, but a spirit or power attracted to and incorporated in it, while separable from it." [16] However this may be, it is not always possible to distinguish clearly between the two conceptions.

West Africa is the true home of the fetish. Everywhere, even to-day, these mysterious objects are met with in the villages. Many travellers have described them, but the following quotation from the Swedish missionary Hammar is typical. "When one visits the villages and looks at the houses and their movables," he writes, "the attention is at

once drawn to a peculiar bundle which is hanging at the projecting part of the roofing, at the gable-end or the long-side, and asking what it is one receives the answer that it is *nkisi*. This bundle is carried up by a net-work which has the form of a netted bag, and is generally covered by one or more cat's or monkey's skins. It contains all sorts of things, for instance chalk, glimmer, salt, powder, pepper, hair, feathers, claws, teeth, seeds, metal rings, mountain crystals, etc. It is coated with palm-oil and red ochre, and has further appendages of rattles, made of gourds or other fruits, containing hard seeds. The *minkisi* (plur.), however, vary much and may also consist of a gourd, a bent branch of a tree, a bundle of rings and seeds, a snail's shell, etc." Our informant adds that, in order to enter into a *nkisi*, things must be associated with remarkable incidents or be taken from wild and strong animals, from famous persons, and so forth. [17]

There can be no doubt as to the animistic origin of the things contained in such a fetish. It must be further emphasized that a "fetishism" of the kind described here is by no means limited to West Africa, but is almost universal in lower cultures. The *nkisi* of the Congo negroes seems to be an almost direct equivalent of the magical "medicines" and fetishes of the North American Indians, which are composed partly of the same things. Similar medicines, fetishes, amulets, or whatever one likes to call them, are also extremely common among the Indians of South America. On the whole, this form of fetishism provides an interesting instance of what Bastian called an *Elementargedanke*, it being useless trying to explain it by the principle of cultural diffusion.

As for stone worship in the proper sense of the word, stones are the objects of religious reverence among many peoples because they are looked upon as men transformed into this medium. In some cases these are well-known historical personages. Such ideas are met with, for instance, among Finno-Ugrian peoples like the Ostyaks, among the Samoyedes, and also among the Hindus and other Indian peoples. Those groups of stones in an erect position, worshipped by the inhabitants in many places in India, are generally supposed to embody some definite god and belong frequently to a religious system with specialized polytheistic divinities. Among the modern Hindus the stone fetishes are therefore a kind of

*Sondergötter* with definite spheres of activity. Thus Siva is worshipped in the form of a stone or an effigy of clay, and is even propitiated with sanguinary rites.

In ancient Peru stone worship was very prominent, forming part and parcel of a polytheistic religion. Many of the important objects or places of worship called *huacas* were stones or rocks. The current idea about these stone-fetishes was that they were men—generally members of the Inca family—who had been changed into stone. The *huaca* Huanacauri, for instance, a hill in the neighbourhood of Cuzco, was one of the most important cult centres in the whole Inca empire. The fetish on this hill was simply an unwrought stone, into which, according to a legend, a brother of the first Inca had been changed. It was a fetish of first rank and was believed to bring luck in war. When the Inca undertook a warlike expedition he always brought this fetish with him. Its supernatural power was due to the supposed fact that it harboured the spirit of a mighty Inca ruler. [18]

If sticks and stones are the objects of religious worship because they are regarded as the abodes of departed souls, it is easy to understand why the stone, at a somewhat higher state of culture, is frequently moulded intentionally into a certain human likeness. Fetishism thus soon passes into the worship of images or effigies, or what missionaries generally call "worship of idols." At this stage art enters the service of religion, very imperfectly, of course, at the beginning.

The worship of spirits or gods in the shape of images occurs among somewhat higher peoples living in a natural state, notably in Polynesia, but as well in Africa, North America, and so forth. The Incas of Peru, who were polytheists, represented their three highest gods, the Creator, the Sun, Thunder and Lightning, in the form of idols of gold with human shape. For the great feasts, these idols were taken out from the temples and set up in the market-place of Cuzco, where they were honoured with sanguinary rites, sometimes even human sacrifices. At the same time they were a kind of fetish charged with supernatural power: the ancestral spirits who resided in the sky, in the sun, and in the thunder and lightning were believed, in the most real sense of the word, to be present in these idols or statues. [19]

Numerous instances of the same kind may be quoted from

other parts of the world. Thus the *seita* of the Lapps belong to the same category of animated objects, although somewhat more primitive in character. The word is of Scandinavian origin, being derived from *seid*, a kind of magic exercised by the female Scandinavian shamans, the *volva*. In the religion of the Lapps the *seita* signify rude statues or idols of stone or wood, which were at one time erected on special sacred places, notably on mountains, and were the objects of a cult.

Like the *huaca* of the Incas, the *seita* of the Lapps were closely connected with the cult of the dead. The general belief was that the *seita* were men transformed into stone. It was quite natural that the *seita*-spirits should be associated with the spirits of the dead—called by the Lapps the *saivo*-people—since the spirits of the departed were believed to inhabit the mountains where the *seita* were placed. Incorporating thus the spirits of the dead, they were looked upon as the guardian spirits of particular families. They were honoured with valuable sacrifices, and prayers were addressed to them. [20]

The primitive conception that a spirit or god really has his abode in the idol and acts through it, tends, of course, to disappear at higher stages of culture. It is replaced by the idea that the idol is only an external symbol of the deity, without being in some intrinsic way associated with him. With what conservatism an undeveloped religious consciousness clings to the original idea, we see from the important part played by the worship of images in higher religion, even Christianity.

The worship of sticks and stones seems to have been a common phenomenon among many peoples of archaic culture. We meet it among Semitic peoples, to whom meteorites were particularly sacred because the deity was believed to live in them. These sacred stones were erected close to the altar and served, perhaps originally, as altars. To cult stones of this description belonged, for instance, the “animate stones” or *baityltoi* (*bethel*=“the god’s house”) of the Canaanites mentioned by Philo, as well as the famous black stone in the old sanctuary of the Arabs, *kaaba* in Mekka. The worship of the latter, originally an ordinary fetish, was adopted by the religion when reformed by Mahomet and was closely associated with the cult of Allah. Among the classical Greeks, the worship of rough stones seems to have flourished throughout the whole

of antiquity. The Greek geographer Pausanias, who travelled in Greece in the second century A.D., found numerous traces of this old cult. He states expressly that "in ancient times all the Greeks worshipped unwrought stones instead of images." Even rough sticks and wooden pillars were the objects of worship, and in part were given human form. [21]

Curious it is to find that, in some respects, the early Greeks did not, any more than uncivilized peoples of our own days, make a sharp distinction between animate and inanimate objects. They treated lifeless things as if endowed with life, consciousness, and even will. Pausanias writes that "lifeless things are said to have inflicted of their own accord a righteous punishment on men", and gives instances. [22] It is also well known that, at Athens, there was a special tribunal for the purpose of punishing inanimate objects which had accidentally been the cause of injury or death. [23] With such a view prevailing, we can understand how the worship of inanimate things like sticks, stones, rocks, mountains, caves, etc., flourished throughout antiquity.

Here the worship of sacred *cairns* may be touched upon. In many parts of the world, for instance in Africa, India, the South Sea Islands, and ancient Peru, it was the custom for natives to accumulate heaps of stones at certain places, such as roads in the mountain passes, the tops of high hills, cross-ways, etc., and to make them the objects of a certain cult.

As to the true nature of this cult, however, there has been a diversity of opinion. In ancient Peru these sacred heaps of stone were called *apachita*, and were venerated almost as highly as the places called *huaca*. From a close examination it seems apparent to me that the "cult" of sacred cairns is prompted everywhere by the desire to avert evils which might arise from spirits inhabiting the places where they are erected. In regard also to the Peruvian *apachitas*, the information supplied by ancient chroniclers, like the Father Arriga and Cobo, and by modern ethnologists is enough to establish their true nature. In ancient Peru these cairns were found all along the roads or tracks, especially in the higher and little-inhabited parts. Every Indian who passed them added a stone. If he had his quid of coca in his mouth he took it out and threw it against the cairn, muttering a prayer or conjuration. The

etymology of the word *apachita* shows that they were places which "carried away" something. To this very day the Ecuadorian and Peruvian mountain Indians commonly believe that the tiredness and exhaustion which overtakes them when climbing the high cordilleras with their heavy burdens is caused by a demon who lives on the top of the hill. It is natural, therefore, when reaching the top to try and keep off the evil demon by throwing stones at the place where he is believed to have his seat. In this way the *apachitas* became places which "carried away" the fatigue of the travelling Indian. [24]

The stone is not only a natural weapon but, on account of its hardness, is believed to possess supernatural power. This too seems to be the real nature of the sacred heaps of stone which are the object of superstitious practices among the Bantu tribes, Bushmen, and Hottentots of South Africa. Dudley Kidd states that evil spirits or angry ancestral spirits are evidently supposed to haunt such spots. The fact that Kafirs pray at such heaps of stones would suggest some appeasing of ancestral spirits. Or the natives may seek to drive away evil spirits by the throwing of a stone, this being merely one of the many ways in which savages transfer evil from themselves to other things. [25] At bottom a similar idea underlies the "worship" of cairns among the half-civilized natives of Morocco. Dr. Westermarck states that one exceedingly common class of cairns in Morocco derive their *baraka* or holiness from their connection with a saint. Sometimes a cairn marks the place where a holy man is said to have been buried, or to have rested or camped. [26]

Another important form of nature worship is the worship of *mountains* and, in certain parts of the world, of *volcanoes*. As a matter of fact, high mountains with their steep ridges, deep chasms, and mysterious caves are most likely of all to attract the attention of primitive people, and still more the fire-spitting volcanoes. From all corners of the globe come statements of the worship of mountains, and everywhere, on the whole, there seem to be the same basic principles. Nowhere have "sacred" mountains been more common than in India. To this day the natives look upon mysterious mountains and hills as the seats of malevolent spirits.

The most detailed accounts, however, come from the mountain regions of Central and South America. In the

virgin forests east of the Andes in Ecuador and Peru, for example, the Indians regard all high hills and cordilleras with special awe. These, they believe, are the seats of the spirits of their dead medicine-men. When the Jibaro Indians wander on hills and mountains, especially those they have not visited before, they keep silent and do not use their guns in case the demon of the hill should get angry. If noises are heard in the interior of the mountain in passing, they say that it is the *iguanchi* (a departed medicine-man) who is beating his drum or expressing displeasure at having been disturbed. The big signal drum of the Jibaros is even said to be an imitation of the giant drum of the *iguanchi* living in the hills. Being spirits of dead medicine-men and sorcerers, the demons of the hills and mountains are also believed to send disease. Hence the "hill demons" are often invoked by the Jibaro medicine-men when curing their patients. Most feared of all are the snow-clad mountains and volcanoes, because their spirits are said to send chills and catarrhs and other diseases. All the greatest volcanoes in South America, Chimborazo and Cotopaxi in Ecuador, Illimani in Bolivia, and Aconcagua in Chile, have been worshipped by the natives for this reason, sometimes even with human sacrifices. Everywhere in South America the fundamental idea underlying the worship of mountains was the same, namely, that mountains are inhabited by spirits who are by nature the souls of departed Indians, notably those of medicine-men. [27]

Nowhere were mountains more eagerly worshipped than in ancient Mexico. One of the great mystery-feasts of the Aztecs was the "mountain-feast", celebrated annually, and at the same time was connected with the worship of the rain-god Tlaloc, with snake-worship and so forth. At this feast, among other things, human sacrifices and a ceremony of "eating the god" took place. From a paste of amaranth seeds, effigies of the mountain were made. On a certain day these effigies were ceremonially cut into pieces, the latter being divided between the different families and then consumed. [28] The details of this mystery-feast do not concern us here. It is enough to state the main idea underlying it, namely, that the mountains were inhabited by spirits of the departed who were believed, among other things, to send rain.

The same ideas were prevalent among the Scandinavian

and Finnish Lapps also. Among their most important divinities was the "sacred mountains", *passe-vare*. The spirits of the departed Lapps were believed to take up their abode in the mountains. The Lapps were perfectly acquainted with the "mountain-people"—generally called *saivo*-people—because they used occasionally to visit their departed relatives, drinking and feasting with them. The *saivo*-people were the guardian spirits of the living. [29] As I have pointed out, there was a close relationship between this mountain worship of the Lapps and their *seita*-worship.

The worship of *caves*, common in the lower cultures, is closely connected with the worship of mountains. The belief, which seems to be the rule, that the mysterious spirits which haunt gloomy caves are those of departed men, is easy to understand when we realize that caves served at one time as human dwellings, and that the dead were frequently buried in them.

Caves were the objects of worship not only among such peoples as the Indians of South America and certain primitive tribes of India, but also among peoples of culture like the Greeks. The Indians enter subterranean caves only with hesitation and dread, because they imagine that these dark and mysterious places are haunted by the spirits of the dead. Owls and other nocturnal birds they meet there are generally regarded as reincarnations of the dead. [30] In ancient Greece sacred caves, believed to be inhabited by nymphs and other supernatural beings, were quite numerous. The neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry even expresses the opinion that in early times the ancients used to consecrate caves to their gods before even they had discovered how to build them temples. The religious rites associated, for instance, with the subterranean chasm at Delphi, the mephitic gases of which were supposed to fill the prophesying priestess with a divine spirit, were in fact founded on very primitive ideas. [31]

As to other spirits or divinities of the earth, we still have to deal with the spiritual beings which inhabit *water*, those beings who people the sea, lakes, streams, rivers, and wells. There is no doubt that the primitive belief which endows water with life, regarding it even as a "divine" element, is much easier to understand from our point of view than, for instance, the worship of a stone. In fact, there is nothing

more likely to give an undeveloped mind the idea of life, will, and power than the restless sea with its constant undulatory motion, sometimes growing into a furious gale, its regular tides, and so forth. Even civilized man, in speaking of the "fury of the storm", shows a tendency to personify the natural power of the sea; how much more, therefore, the uncultured savage. In regard, however, to the worship of water we meet with two notions in the lower culture which ought, to a certain extent, to be kept apart. On the one hand there is a direct worship of water as such, that is to say, as a vaguely personified element; on the other, the worship of a real *spirit* of the water. Pre-animists, of course, consider the first notion as the primary one, but close inquiries seem to prove rather that the reverse has been the case.

In regard to the Finno-Ugrian peoples, whose ideas have been closely investigated, Castrén was still of the opinion that water had been worshipped by them originally in its "immediate sensuous form", simply as a material element. He assumed this to be true of most Finno-Ugrian tribes even to-day. [32] This assertion of Castrén's, however, seems to have as little validity as a similar statement of his about their stone-worship. At any rate, Dr. Holmberg's researches on this point have resulted in showing that, among those peoples who have best preserved the original ideas, namely, the Lapps, the peoples of the river Ob in Siberia, the Ostyaks and the Vogules, water has been worshipped under the form of an individual local spirit, and not as water. The latter idea is frequently connected with the idea of an impersonal magical power inherent in the water, but this seems to appear later and is only encountered among more advanced tribes, influenced from without, such as the Votyaks, the Tsheremisses, the proper Finns, etc. The Finns used to address in poetic terms the water of the lakes and rivers, using the appellation the "Mother of the water" (*veden-emä*), or some such pleasing epithet. In the same way, the magical spell-formula for the "power of the water" was used for the cure of sickness. [33]

Among other things, these conclusions agree perfectly with the result I arrived at in my own particular field of research, South America. Besides which, they confirm the hypothesis I have set forth before, namely, that, in the evolution of religious thought, the impersonal magical "power", as found

among certain higher peoples, represents a *secondary* notion in relation to the purely animistic idea of a spirit.

When the sea, lakes, rivers, wells, etc., are looked upon as animated by spiritual beings, this is consequently no doubt a "primitive" idea. Another question concerns, of course, the nature of the souls or spirits believed to inhabit the water. In this respect one must observe that there is little clear evidence as to the belief in water possessing a special soul of its own. It is doubtful, in fact, whether the water-demons form a special category among the nature-spirits of the lower peoples. Those spirits or demons who inhabit seas, lakes, rivers, and wells are therefore essentially the same as those in mountains, rocks, caves, the forest, and so forth.

As to the water-spirits of the Finno-Ugrian peoples, it has been shown that most of them are by nature simply souls of departed men, and that their worship is closely related to the worship of the dead. Thus all tribes of the Finno-Ugrian stock believe that the souls or spirits of those drowned in a lake or river have become local water-divinities haunting the scene of the accident. [34] This belief is found in many parts of the world. The water-spirits of the Indians, for instance, frequently belong to this species. If an Indian loses his life in a rapid river or a cataract, his soul is changed into a demon who haunts that spot. According to the belief of the Jibaro Indians, the spirits of their forefathers inhabit the small waterfalls in the cordilleras where they are used to taking their ritual baths. The water, therefore, in these falls has magical power which fills the Indian bathing there. The natives think that the enormously deep and ice-cold lagoons in the Andes are haunted by the souls of malevolent sorcerers who send disease. [35] It is natural that these spirits, especially the spirits of people drowned in the lake or river, should be regarded as malevolent and dangerous beings.

But there is also another quite contrary idea held about water in many lakes, streams, rivers, and wells, namely, that it has supernatural virtue and highly beneficial effects. In the worship of water, as is seen, for instance, among Finnish peoples, the idea is often demonstrated that water not only has beneficial effects on agriculture, but also promotes the fecundity of women and of animals. Hence among the Votyaks and the Estonians the ceremonial sprinkling with

water was always a customary marriage rite. On the third day, among the former, both bride and bridegroom were taken down to the river, where they had to "step into the water." Also on the morning following the wedding, they had to sprinkle each other with water which was brought by the women with certain ceremonies. [36] Whether the sprinkling with water in this case was a purification ceremony, or was due to its supposed fertilizing effects, is not clearly indicated. That magically purifying effects are commonly attributed to water, is well known, but its "power" in many cases, at least, is just as obviously due to the spirit which is regarded as its soul or essence.

In the same way, for instance, the Bantu tribes of South Africa believe in river spirits which are propitiated with animal sacrifices or other offerings. But these water-deities are ancestral spirits living in the river. "It is very doubtful," says Dudley Kidd, "whether the natives have any fully-formed conception of what we call a river-spirit; it seems more probable that they imagined some ancestral spirit to be living in the river, or that some fabulous animal had its home in the water." [37]

From many other parts of the world comes information about the same kind of primitive worship of water, although one is not always clear as to the nature of the "sacredness" ascribed to lakes, rivers, and so on. To the same category belongs the water-worship of Aryan peoples. To the modern Hindu the Ganges is only the most important and best known of their many sacred rivers. Among the ancient Greeks the worship of rivers was very prominent. [38] There is no doubt that it had a purely animistic foundation, as also did the Roman worship of the Tiber. We know that the sacerdotal office of the *pontifices* among the Romans probably originated in the necessity of performing certain rites in honour of the Tiber, whose anger was provoked every time its current was traversed by bridges. [39] One may infer that the Greeks held similar ideas from the important part that the river-gods play among the motley crowd of divinities who meet us in the Homeric songs. Similarly, one of the benevolent pieces of advice Hesiod gives his hearers in his *Works and Days* is never to cross a stream before washing one's hands, praying, and looking earnestly at the stream. [40] That Hesiod's injunctions

were observed throughout the whole of antiquity, may be inferred from the knowledge we have of the many instances of worship given to rivers and streams. Valuable sacrifices of horses, bulls, etc., were sometimes offered to the river-gods. The river-worship of the Greeks was no doubt a survival from early times in the history of the Aryan race. [41]

In many cases the "water-spirits" are merely dangerous animals living in rivers and other waters, such as crocodiles, water-snakes, fishes, etc. One of the most dreaded water-demons in the Amazon region in South America is the great anaconda or water-serpent (*Eunectes murinus*), called *yacumama*, "the Water-mother", by the Indians. Even this demon is believed to be an evil sorcerer who, after death, takes the shape of this monster. Many accidents which happen on the river during canoeing are attributed by the Indians to this powerful water-demon. [42]

The spirits of springs are often worshipped as powers promoting fertility, an idea which at a higher stage—*i.e.* where agriculture has become the mainstay of a people—is connected with water-spirits in general. The idea about the fertilizing effects of springs was particularly prominent in ancient Peru, where the worship of springs was closely associated with the worship of the sea. As a "mother of the waters" the sea was looked upon specially as a mother of springs. In fact, springs were called "the daughters of the sea", and when directing sacrifices and prayers to them the Peruvians first addressed Viracocha, the Creator, who among other things was connected with the sea. It is easy to understand that in arid regions like Western Peru, where rain is scarce and in some parts non-existent for a whole year, permanently flowing waters should have an enormous importance for the irrigation of the soil. Only thus can the fervent worship of springs in ancient Peru be satisfactorily explained. [43] On the other hand, in Europe and elsewhere, there are also instances of the springs being worshipped as harmful divinities who send certain kinds of disease. In Estonia, for instance, we meet with the idea that springs may send a certain disease of the skin, due probably to their supposed connection with mysterious underground spirits. This belief is Aryan in origin and is found also in many parts of Germany. [44]

The springs are honoured, partly with bloodless offerings,

partly with real sacrifices. Later on we shall see that these rites are essentially magical in nature and have for their object the augmenting of the power of springs to spread fertility.

But in other respects also, springs and streams played an important part in the magical practices of uncivilized peoples. To these I have already drawn attention. Flowing water possesses supernatural power, *mana*. It washes away the dangerous pollution caused by evil and impure spirits, and if, among some peoples, certain springs are believed to cause sickness, there are others on the contrary, who ascribe to them wonderful curative effects. The classical instance of a miraculous spring is the pond Bethesda mentioned in the New Testament, which never failed to cure those who stepped into its healing water. [45] Robertson Smith has established the fact that, on the whole, the worship of sacred waters was exceedingly common among Semitic peoples. But the worship of springs is also prominent among Aryan peoples. The sacred springs found, for instance, in distant places in Sweden and among the Swedish population in Finland, may be mentioned as evidence to this effect. Small coins are frequently offered to them, and in other cases, pins and other pointed objects. One must evidently explain the latter custom as an attempt to ward off harmful influences arising from the springs. [46]

Among more civilized peoples local water-spirits are gradually developed into special kinds of *Sonnergötter*, whose sphere of activity is strictly defined, and lastly into polytheistic gods. To the latter belong many of the river-deities we find in the Homeric songs, although their animistic origin is obvious. The Scandinavian *näcken* is also a half-polytheistic anthropomorphic deity present also among the Estonians and Finns. He is a fairy of the water, haunting lakes, streams, and springs, and is always regarded as a malevolent being attacking, for instance, those who bathe in the river. [47] The Ahti of the Finns is a purely polytheistic being, a powerful water- and sea-god. Among other important polytheistic divinities of the water and sea is the Peruvian Mamacocha. As a personification of the endless ocean she was "the mother of all waters". The Babylonian sea-god Ea had the same character. In his capacity as lord of the deep waters and subterranean springs, he was at the same time worshipped as a principle of the

fertility of the soil, even as the original source of life. [48] More indefinite in his character is the Greek Poseidon. At first, Poseidon seems to have been a god of the sea and of the watery elements in general, the billows of which with his trident he could set in violent motion at pleasure, or, on the contrary, soothe. Like most sea-gods he could also influence the fertility of the soil. [49]

A prominent place in the primitive world of spirits is occupied by the supernatural beings whose activities are expressed in *natural phenomena*. The belief that phenomena like thunder and lightning, meteors, the rainbow, etc., are due to supernatural causes must ultimately be explained by the savage people's ignorance of what we call natural laws. Since, on the other hand, uncivilized man is prompted by a practical desire to form an idea about the causes of certain natural phenomena, he arrives at a theory which, from his intellectual point of view, lies within easy reach.

Earthquakes, for instance, have been ascribed by all savage and barbaric peoples to supernatural monsters. Concealed in the bowels of the earth, these, through their movements, cause this feared natural phenomenon. A phenomenon like thunder can only arise from invisible spiritual beings at work behind the clouds. The South American Indians believe that violent thunderstorms are caused by a great number of evil spirits making noises and rushing through the air. [50] The Chaco Indians regard these demons as enemies making an onset on the village. Every time a burst of thunder is heard, the Indians, seated in their huts, start to shout and scream loudly in order to frighten away the molesting supernatural visitors. [51] The same is true of the Jibaros, as I have mentioned before, when comparing their ideas and customs with similar ones among the Kafirs of South Africa. In short, we are dealing here with an idea typical of lower peoples all over the world. At higher stages of culture the idea about this natural phenomenon becomes more and more individualized. Thunder is now ascribed to one powerful personal being who resides above the clouds, and lightning to the "sword" which he brandishes against men. In this way have arisen those dreadful thunder- and lightning-gods familiar from Aryan religions and who, for instance, appear in typical form in the Greek Zeus and the Scandinavian Tor. These

purely anthropomorphic deities of the thunder and lightning belong, however, to the polytheistic stage in the history of religion.

The South American Indians have the same idea about comets and meteors as about thunder and lightning, namely, that evil spirits—in many cases the spirits of dead sorcerers—are working through these unusual phenomena. Even more interesting is their idea about the rainbow. The rainbow is also commonly regarded as an evil spirit, and its appearance considered a bad omen. He is particularly dangerous to young women, since he has the power to make them supernaturally pregnant. This belief is found among the mountain Indians in Peru, and also in the virgin forests east of the Andes. The Indians of Western Amazonas fancy that the rainbow is nothing more than a huge anaconda (water-serpent) in the air, or, as they generally express it, the "shadow of the anaconda". Women among these Indians fear the rainbow particularly as the reincarnation of the spirit of an evil wizard. When the rainbow appears, a woman in her menstrual period is not supposed to go out for fear the rainbow demon should make her pregnant, in which case she will give birth to a demoniacal child. [52]

In the same way winds and tempests are looked upon as manifestations of the activity of supernatural beings. In the Chaco, the violent whirlwinds which are often seen moving along the ground raising pillars of dust and damaging the habitations are regarded by the Indians as the passing of spirits or demons. Of such spirits the Toba Indians say, "There goes a *peyak* (evil spirit) dancing in the dust." [53] In the Amazon region the violent hurricanes which frequently blow over a limited space in the virgin forest and cause enormous devastation among the trees and plants, are attributed to dreadful supernatural monsters passing through the forest.

At a higher stage of religious evolution these wind- and tempest-demons appear frequently as personal beings. Such were the wind-gods of classical peoples. Well known is Virgil's description of *Æolus*, in the *Aeneid*, that king of the winds who kept his refractory subjects shut up in dark subterranean caves lest in the fury of their hurricane-flight they should sweep away lands and seas. [54] In Homer, for instance, the personification of the winds is seen in the description of Achilles calling on *Boreas* and *Zephyrus* with libations and vows of sacrifices to

blow into a blaze the funeral pyre of Patroklos. [55] The idea of wind-demons appears in its most primitive form, however, in popular Greek religion where it lingers on during the whole of antiquity. An English Greek scholar, Miss Harrison, has even tried to show that the primitive Greeks thought of wind-demons as essentially ghosts, that is storm ghosts, who snatched away people to death. This idea would explain why the Greeks propitiated them with the same rites as those performed for the dead. [56] That they were associated with the gloomy region of the under-world is quite natural since, among other things, they were believed to bring with them pestiferous disease.

Examples of a direct worship of wind-gods or -demons are numerous among the Greeks. One of the most famous is that mentioned by Herodotus and other writers concerning the Athenians during the Persian War. When Xerxes was marching against Greece they inquired of the Delphic oracle and were told that they ought to prey and sacrifice to the winds as these would be powerful allies of Greece. The Athenians did so, with the result that a violent storm arose which cast away no less than four hundred of the Persian vessels. From this time onward an official regular cult of the winds seems to have been established in Greece. [57]

As of the Greeks, so of the lower cultures in general, the wind-demons seem, in most cases, to be conceived as spirits of the dead.

Among the nature-spirits proper one must also include those spiritual beings animating *heavenly bodies*, the sky itself as well as the sun, the moon, and the stars. This particular form of worship has recently been the object of elaborate inquiries, so I shall not dwell long upon it here. Besides this, the heavenly powers are not very prominent in the cult of primitive peoples; they belong rather to the polytheistic than to the animistic stage in the history of religion. The absence or paucity of sun-worship in the lower cultures has been pointed out by Sir James Frazer with special reference to such peoples as the Australian aborigines, the Melanesians, the Polynesians and the Micronesians, as well as the modern black races of Africa. He adds that, whatever may be the reason, a solar religion seems to flourish best among nations which have attained a certain degree of civilization, such as the ancient Egyptians and the Indians of Mexico and Peru at the time when they were discovered. [58]

It is quite natural that, for primitive peoples, the powers of the sky are too far off and interfere too little with their practical life to attract attention and become the objects of worship in the true sense of the word.

Nevertheless, the first beginnings of a cult of heavenly deities, or spirits, can be traced among primitive peoples. The most common idea is that the souls of departed ancestors have transmigrated into the sun, the moon, and the stars. Such ideas, for instance, are found in South America, where one can also study characteristic differences in the conception of the heavenly powers arising from different natural and cultural conditions.

One can understand that in the tropical virgin forests east of the Andes, the sun should be less important as a giver of warmth and fertility than in the cold mountainous regions. In a hot climate the sun may be regarded rather as a malevolent than a beneficent being. Even in a land like ancient Greece the burning pestiferous rays of the sun in summer time could not help giving rise to the belief that the sun-deity appears sometimes as an evil destructive demon who must be appeased with appropriate rites. [59] In tropical and subtropical South America a vague personification of the sun and the moon—who are regarded as “people”—is met with among many tribes, but no real worship is connected with them. More definite are the ideas held by the Onas in Tierra del Fuego. “They like the sun,” says an ethnologist, “simply because formerly it was a great man, and because for the time being it sends light and warmth.” [60] The sun, as also the moon and the stars, are looked upon with great respect, and even with fear. The stars, they assert, are departed men, and some of them, even, men who still live. It is natural that, in a cold country like Tierra del Fuego, the sun should particularly attract the attention of the natives and be respected as a beneficent power.

In tropical South America these ideas are probably rare. In the myths of the Guiana Indians the sun, moon, and stars often figure not only as personified beings, but, in some cases, are said to have human origin. The sun with its crown of rays is described as an Indian with a head ornament of silver and parrot feathers, ear-pendants of brilliant beetle wings, and so on. The moon formerly lived on the earth as an evil sorcerer, while legends are current about the stars, indicating that these heavenly bodies are intimately associated with the departed. The Milky Way,

for instance, is supposed to be the path along which the souls of the departed wander to the Shade-land, a belief found among many tribes. Likewise the Pleiades, which play an important part in the calendar of many primitive peoples. Sowing and planting are often determined by observation of this constellation, which is connected with the spirits of the dead. [61] Such a view, which to a certain extent undoubtedly supports Spencer's well-known theory of the origin of religion, is quite natural, since the Indians fancy that the souls of the departed not only take up their abode in different natural objects on the earth, but also rise upwards to the sky.

It was far otherwise with the worship of the sun and the moon in the highlands of Peru and Bolivia. Although the sun was the special deity of the Incas of Cuzco and its worship spread from them to those Andean peoples whom they conquered, there are numerous traces of a sun-worship in the mountain area independent of the Incas. The sun-worship in the mountain regions of Western South America was not essentially the outcome of deliberate invention or enforced propagation, but had, as it were, a natural foundation. The sun was one of those heavenly powers who had too great an influence upon the welfare of the Indians to be neglected. This becomes perfectly clear from the words used at sacrifices made to the sun-god of the Incas. Phrases repeated again and again in the prayers addressed to him had for theme that he may always remain young and rise every day illuminating the earth, that he may give warmth in order that the fruits may grow, etc. [62]

The sun was not worshiped by the Incas as such, *i.e.* as a heavenly body, but because it was looked upon as the abode of a spirit. On this point one of the best-known authorities on the modern Aimara culture states: "It was not the orbs (sun and moon) to which a certain worship was offered, but to the spiritual beings that dwelt in them, the Achachilas or Pacarinas believed to reside both in the sun and the moon." [63] *Achachila* and *pacarina* were words used by the ancient Quichua and Aimara to denote their ancestors, worshiped at the scared places called *huaca*. We may conclude from this that the sun-deity and the moon-deity belonged to the same category of ancestral spirits as those inhabiting other inanimate natural objects. When the Incas called the sun their "father" from whom they were descended, or when the dying Inca said that he was going to join

his "Father the Sun" who had called him to rest with himself in the other life, this was not merely a metaphor or figure of speech. The whole Inca religion comprised a grand system of ancestor worship and in this, the worship of the sun and other heavenly bodies played an integral part.

Everywhere the sun did not enjoy the same respect as at Cuzco. In some parts of the country his place was secondary in comparison with that occupied by the other heavenly powers. An ancient writer, Antonio de Calancha, tells that the inhabitants of the valley north of Trujillo "worshipped the moon as their principal deity; for he has the power over the elements, produces ailments, and is the cause of the movements of the sea, of the lightning and of the thunder." They had an *huaca* called Si-an ("the house of the moon") where they adored the moon. They looked upon the moon as more potent than the sun, "because the sun only shines in the day, whereas the moon is visible both day and night, and because the moon sometimes causes eclipses of the sun, whereas the sun never causes eclipses of the moon." As well as the moon they worship the Pleiades, because this constellation was believed to bring ailments and to make the plantations grow. [64]

Clearly, the benefits of a solar deity can be fully appreciated only by agricultural peoples. Pastoral peoples, too, will have reason to pay attention to a heavenly god who dispenses warmth and promotes the growth of the pasture.

The Lapps may be mentioned as an instance of pastoral peoples who have developed a sun-worship. It is easy to understand what the appearance of the sun in the spring must have meant for the heathen Lapps after the long arctic night. As an ancient Swedish missionary states, "they regarded the sun as a mother of all living beings." Another ancient writer states that "the sun is called by the Lapps a god who, in shining, warms the earth and effects that the grass grows for the nourishment of the reindeer; and, in order that the sun may shine, the Lapps formerly sacrificed to it white cattle, and on the Midsummer Eve used to eat, in honour of the sun, a porridge called the 'porridge of the sun'. Before making these offerings, the Lapps always went down on their knees and prayed to the sun that it might bountifully throw its warmth on their reindeer and upon everything else of which they derived sustenance. They did the same after the porridge offering was consumed, praying

that the sun might grant them a plentiful milk-summer and that their reindeer might prosper." [65]

Many of the offerings of the Lapps, especially to the sun, were magical in character, as we shall see later. Such, for instance, were the images of the sun offered to this solar deity, and the sun-rings which were held towards him so that his rays were caught with it. The conspicuous object of these rites was to promote, in a purely mechanical way, the rising of the sun over the horizon, or to keep its light as long as possible. The sun-worship of the Lapps which, in spite of a certain Scandinavian influence, is doubtless in essence a genuinely native cult-form, is typical, on the whole, of the religion of an arctic people.

From early times among other Finno-Ugrian peoples the sky, with its many mysterious phenomena, its lights, its rain, its thunder and lightning, etc., was the object of a certain worship. In a general way the heavenly bodies were thought to be animated, but at any rate there is no direct relation between this cult and the cult of the dead, which elsewhere forms the foundation of the Finno-Ugrian religion. As among the Aryans, so in the Finno-Ugrian area, the heaven was worshipped simply as such or in its material form, the same word being used for "heaven-god" as for "heaven". It is only later among the Votyaks, for instance, that the heaven was worshipped as a personal anthropomorphic deity, known by the name of Inmar. He is regarded above all as the god of agriculture, who will promote the fertility of the fields.

Next to the heaven-god the Votyaks pay reverence to the spirit of the sun, of the thunder, and of the earth, whereas the Tsheremisses worship both the sun and the moon as "Mothers". It is a worship based wholly on a vague animation of these heavenly bodies. [66] But whereas both the sky and sun have thus been looked upon as real gods among the Finno-Ugrian tribes, and been appealed to especially in connection with agriculture, one has to remember that these cults are largely of comparatively recent origin and the result of foreign influence. It may now be difficult, even impossible, to determine what ideas these peoples held about the powers of the sky in primitive times. Judging from the ideas held by other primitive peoples, however, we must assume that their rôle in practical religion has been insignificant.

Uncultured peoples, extending their theory of animation to everything, also deify *objects made by human hand*. In speaking of the intrinsic tendency of the Malays to attribute a soul to natural objects, Mr. Skeat remarks that one must be prepared to find that the Malay theory of animism embraces "the human race, animals and birds, vegetation (trees and plants), reptiles and fishes, its extension to inert objects, such as minerals and sticks and stones, weapons, boats, food, clothes, ornaments, and other objects which to us are not merely soulless, but lifeless." [67] This statement, I think, holds true of most uncivilized peoples. In the imagination of the Tshеремис, for instance, his old dwelling, the *kåta*, becomes as it were a living being to whom one can speak and who understands the wants of man. When he settles down in a new house he prays to it for prosperity: "Grant me health and well-being, give me domestic happiness." This prayer, however, does not seem to be addressed to the cottage as such, but to the *spirit* who is looked upon as its invisible owner and inhabitant. At one time it was the custom to arrange for this house-spirit, in a corner of the *kåta*, a kind of altar for offerings. This consisted of a small bark box provided with a roof, in which the offerings were laid. The modern Tshеремис also speaks of his particular house-spirits and of the soul (*ört*) of the cottage. As with the soul of man, the soul of the *kåta* may leave his dwelling-place, temporarily or for ever. If the inhabitants quarrel, scream, smoke much tobacco in the house, or keep it dirty, the "soul" disappears. "You drive away the soul of my house," says the Tshеремис when somebody disturbs the peace in his home. Not only the dwelling-houses proper, but also other buildings, such as the stable, the kiln, the bath-house, the store-house, and so forth have their local or tutelary spirits. Similarly the boat, the field-gate, the axe, the plough, the sickle, the cup, the spoon, the mirror, the shoes, the carriage-gear, and so forth were believed to have souls of their own. [68]

Ideas of this kind are met with among many primitive peoples. At one time, for example, the Finns of Finland held exactly the same belief about local spirits or fairies inhabiting dwelling-houses and other important buildings, as the Tshеремис. Among the Swedish population in Finland this belief had its counterpart in the beings called *tomten*, *rådaren*, and so forth. But originally both the Swedish *tomten* and the Finno-Ugrian house-spirits seem to have been merely the spirits of departed

men, who still continued to hold sway over the house they once inhabited and became the objects of worship. [69]

When the Quichua Indians in Peru build a new house, they bury at each of the pillars supporting the house, certain peculiar things which are supposed to contain magical power: llama-fœtuses, coca, small tin-figures, Indian pepper, salt, etc. The aim of these sacrifices is to impart strength and stability to the new building and to prevent its breaking down prematurely. [70] The ancient Scandinavian vikings were inspired by a similar idea when they smeared the keel of their vessels with human blood. It is not quite clear in these instances, whether the sacrifices were directed to the material objects themselves, to the house and the boat personified, or to the spirits or souls thought to animate them. Considering that lower peoples commonly ascribe souls to weapons and implements, food- and drinking-vessels and so forth, the latter seems probable. The Pueblo Indians, famed for their clay vessel industry, regard the clay vessel as a living being with a principle of life or soul. On the ornaments which decorate the external side of the vessel one notes a constant feature, namely, that encircling lines are left with open ends, the little space serving as an exit trail for the life or being. The noise made by a pot when struck is supposed to be the voice of its associated being; the clang of a pot when it breaks or suddenly cracks in burning is the cry of this being as it escapes or separates from the vessel. [71]

Similar ideas are found among some South American Indians. The Jibaros believe that the clay vessel has the soul of a woman; only women, therefore, can make clay vessels, just as they mostly handle them in daily life. In the same way other utensils, weapons, implements, clothes, needles, etc., have their own souls. Among other things, when the Jibaro Indian is intoxicated by his narcotic drinks and has unusual visions, the souls animating such objects appear to him. I may add that the ceremonial breaking of clay vessels in South America, which takes place notably at burials, is due in part at least to animistic ideas: when the clay vessel is broken its soul is set free. [72]

The fact that the spirits of such objects always appear in human form, seems to show that they have the same origin as most other animistic beings treated in this chapter. In many, perhaps most cases, they are simply human souls which have taken up their abode in these objects. In other cases they may

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only be moulded with the human soul as a pattern. Be this as it may, a close examination of the animistic ideas of the lower peoples seems to lead to this conclusion, namely, that the spiritual life with which primitive man endows the objects and phenomena of nature, animals, plants, and inanimate objects, is but a projection of his own psychical life. In its widest sense, therefore, nature-worship proves to be simply a part of the worship of man himself. This fact, moreover, can be illustrated by the spiritualism and demonology of savage and barbaric peoples.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TOTEMISM

TOTEMISM is a subject which, for two reasons, I shall deal with only briefly in this book. In the first place, it has been treated at length by Sir James G. Frazer in *Totemism and Exogamy*. In this he gives a survey of this primitive system of thought which may be considered almost complete in regard to some parts of the world. In the second place, totemism, although closely connected with certain religious and magical ideas, is still a social rather than a religious phenomenon, and should be given detailed treatment in a sociological work rather than one on religion. Nevertheless, there are certain areas which Sir James Frazer has touched on only superficially. As to the question as to how totemism originated, there may, I think, be opinions which differ from those expressed by him in this work.

Ever since MacLennan, through his well-known articles in the *Fortnightly Review* on "The Worship of Animals and Plants", drew the attention of anthropologists and historians of religion to the phenomenon called "totemism", this form of primitive religion or superstition has held a central place in discussions about the social organization and beliefs of the lower peoples. Not only did MacLennan show that totemism is met with among many more peoples than the Indians of North America and the Australian aborigines, but he expressed the opinion that it has marked a stage of culture through which all peoples have passed. As indicated by the very title of his articles, he started, moreover, from the assumption that any form of animal and plant worship must have a totemistic origin.

All these obvious exaggerations have been repeated even in our own days, although, on the whole, a more sober view is now taken on the subject. Most anthropologists realize that totemism is neither a general phenomenon, common to all lower races at a certain stage of culture, the viewpoint of the culture-history school, nor is it identical with the worship of animals and

plants as is still sometimes contended. The question whether totemism exists, or has once existed, among all lower races of mankind has been discussed with an earnestness which indicates that more weight has often been ascribed to it than it really deserves. The answer to much of it depends on the meaning given to the term "totemism". If by a totem we mean a special class of animals or plants to which a certain group of people pay reverence, assuming a mysterious affinity between themselves and that animal or plant—as the most general definition of totemism—we may certainly say that it is not a world-wide social and religious phenomenon.

Totemism of this kind is found in North America and Australia, also in many other parts of the world, for example in New Guinea and Melanesia, India, Central and South Africa, and so forth. But it was evidently unknown to the various Indo-European peoples, as also to the majority of the Mongolian, Turco-Tartaric, and Finno-Ugrian peoples of Asia. Likewise, all attempts to prove its existence among the ancient Egyptians and the Semitic peoples have been futile, in spite of the efforts of Robertson Smith and his school to prove that the ancient Semites had totemism in its true and original form. On the other hand, it must be noted that the fundamental idea underlying totemism, the idea of the transmigration of souls into animals and plants, is found in some form or other among most lower peoples and that many of them, although they have not developed totemism in the strict sense of the word, still show an approximation to such a system.

Therefore, although totemism is not, on the whole, a characteristic feature of the social and religious life of the North Asiatic peoples, one still finds numerous traces of it, or at any rate of those ideas which, among other peoples, have led to totemism in the proper sense of the word. In a work on the bear-worship of the Ostyaks, the Russian ethnologist N. Haruzin expressed the opinion that these Finno-Ugrian tribes regarded the bear as their totem. Facts which, according to Haruzin, point in this direction are as follows: first, there are myths telling that the bear descends from a hero who once lived on the earth; secondly, the name of the bear is used in some cases as a family name; and thirdly, a slaughtered bear is never entirely destroyed, the *bones* at any rate being always carefully preserved. [1]

Although Haruzin attaches great importance to the last fact,

I think it carries little weight as a proof of totemism. It is a common thing, remember, for the bones of game killed in hunting to be preserved for purely magical reasons, savage peoples believing that wild animals can be controlled through the bones of these animals. This belief has essentially nothing to do with totemism. Still less, without further inquiry, can many other superstitions in regard to animals be interpreted as "traces" of totemism.

On the other hand, the affinity which Siberian tribes suppose to exist between man and the bear unquestionably points to a primitive view likely to lead to totemism. There are also direct evidences of totemism in Siberia. Here, the Samoyedes on the Ket River declare that they are descended from the bear, and wear as emblems the severed nose of the animal together with adjacent parts of the scalp. These emblems are said to represent the "all father" or the totem animal. Dr. Donner, who relates this, adds that he received similar information from the River Tas, where the Samoyedes claim descent from the swan and certain other animals. [2]

Similar stories about the descent of men from certain animals are also current among the Yenisey-Ostyaks. Dr. Karjalainen states that some of the real Ostyaks are familiar with social organizations of this kind. In some parts of the area inhabited by the Ostyaks, the population is divided into three minor groups or clans. Here exogamy prevails, members of the same social group being prohibited from marrying. Among the Tartars also one finds social groups of related persons who take their names from certain animals, the elk, the reindeer, etc. It is stated, however, that the corresponding animals are not the objects of any particular cult or reverence, and members of the group are not forbidden to kill them should opportunity arise.

Here, one may say, we have a clan totemism with a purely social, not a religious significance. According to Karjalainen, the Ostyaks in general were divided into five main tribes which in their turn were subdivided into smaller sibs or clans according to blood-relationship. The former took their names from the rivers on the banks of which lived the various tribes, whereas the sub-tribes took their names from animals such as the reindeer, the wolverine, the sable, the fox, the owl, the hawk, the roach, etc. [3] These animal names point unmistakably to a kind of totemic clan organization among the Ostyaks.

We may add similar other instances. As early as 1730, at a time when the name "totemism" was still unknown to science, a German traveller Ph. J. v. Strahlenberg gave in a work a description of the beliefs of the Yakuts, where he says among other things: "Each family has a special animal which is regarded by it as sacred, e.g. the swan, the goose, the raven, etc., the animal worshipped by a family never being eaten by any member of the same, though others may eat of its meat." [4] The swan plays a part in the mythology of many Central Asiatic peoples, and is generally regarded as a female being. The Buriats, for example, have a tale about a swan-woman whom a hunter married and by whom he had many human children. This belief gave rise among the Buriats to certain ceremonies. [5] The Yenisey-Ostyaks likewise look upon swans as female beings, subjected to menstruation like women. Certain Buriats trace their descent (*uthka*) from a swan. In one of their songs it is said: "The *uthka* of the thousand-numbering Khangin tribe is the bird *sen*, the *uthka* of the Serel-Mongols is the bird *khun*." The words *sen* and *khun* denote the Siberian swan. [6]

The idea that an animal is the male progenitor of a tribe or people seems to be quite common in Asia. Dr. Sternberg states, for instance, that there are many tribes or families on the Amur who trace their descent from the tiger or the bear on the ground that the mothers have dreamt of marital relations with these animals. [7] Stories of this kind are found among other Central Asiatic peoples also. Thus, in a Buriat tale, we hear of an eagle sent by the gods from the heavens to become a shaman on earth. But although it protected men against evil spirits, they did not understand its significance, and so it returned to the heavens. The gods then exhorted it to bestow its shaman nature on the first human being it happened to meet. The eagle then approached a woman sleeping under a tree, with the result that she became pregnant. In due time the woman gave birth to a son who thus became the first shaman. [8]

The manner in which Asiatic peoples believe in descent from some animal is illustrated, for instance, in the case of the Bersit tribe, whose ancestor is said to have been a wolf. [9] The origin of the Mongols is dealt with in several myths. In one we are told how two khans made war on one another, slaying all the people but one woman. This woman met a bear by whom she had two children, and from these sprang the Mongols. [10]

The Kirghis claim descent from a wild boar and, for this reason, refuse to eat pork. [11] Instances of this kind could be easily multiplied. They show clearly that the idea of animals as the ancestors of families and whole tribes occur among a great many Siberian peoples. In some cases, although not all, the belief imposes on the members of the family or tribe in question the duty of sparing the life of the animal from which it claims descent, or of revering it some way.

My aim, as I have said, in establishing these hitherto little known facts about the existence of totemic ideas, or the approximation to a totemic clan organization, among some North and Central Asiatic peoples, has not been to lend further support to the "universality" of totemism. I merely wanted to show the common occurrence, among all lower races of mankind, of ideas about animals which, under certain circumstances, might develop into full totemism. This social and religious system is founded above all on the belief in a close relationship between men and animals, which, in its turn, gives rise easily to the belief in the reincarnation of human souls in animal beings.

Ideas of this kind are found, moreover, in South America, another part of the world where totemism is said to be almost unknown. I have remarked before that ideas about transmigration of human souls into animals and plants are current all over the continent. The close connection between these ideas and the traces of a totemic clan organization among some tribes is easy to establish. A few instances may be mentioned in illustration.

Thus the primitive Indians of Brazil regarded almost every quadruped, bird, or fish which was important as food as the temporary or permanent abode of a human soul. Among the Xingu tribes, for instance, the Bororó, as we have seen before, identify themselves with red macaws: the Bororó are macaws and the macaws Bororó. The souls of both men and women are believed to be reincarnated in this bird. Consequently they never eat macaws, and never kill the tame ones. If one dies, they mourn it. Again, the departed members of other tribes are transformed into other birds. The negroes, for instance, become black urubú vultures; a white man may be changed into a white heron, and so on. But besides this identification of men with certain birds, the same superstition is held of various quadrupeds and fishes. The Bororó believe that

their medicine-men or *bari* are reincarnated in those animals most valued as food. Such animals are the tapir, the head of which is particularly taboo, the capibara or waterhaas, the deer, and the jaguar. All these animals, as also certain kinds of fish, are taboo as food in their natural condition, and require a special ceremony to remove their harmful qualities. [12]

Both the ideas of reincarnation held by the Bororó, and the rites with which they sought to propitiate the slaughtered game, offer many interesting points of resemblance to the corresponding ideas and rites of strictly totemic peoples in the northern continent of the New World. The macaw, into which the souls of the dead Bororó were believed to enter, might easily in fact be called the totem of these Indians, the rites performed in "honour" of the dead animals being in essence the same as the totem ceremonies of the North American peoples. On the Xingu, dancing also forms part of the hunting-feasts. Often connected with these, moreover, are mask-dances in which certain quadrupeds, birds, and fish are imitated. In the same way exactly in North America certain animals are magically influenced by imitative mask-dances. The only difference is that, in North America, these animals are mostly clan totems, whereas on the Xingu any kind of game in which spirits of the dead are believed to be incarnate are made the objects of these magical ceremonies.

Just as the Bororó identify themselves with red macaws, so the Gayataczes, another Brazilian tribe now extinct, believed that after death their souls passed into the bird *sacy* (*Coracina ornata*), which thus, in a sense, was the "totem" of these Indians. [13] The influence of the doctrine of the transmigration of the souls upon the social organization of the Indians can be traced, for instance, in the case of the Juri Indians of the river Yapurá. Among them we find various families or subordinate hordes which take their names from animals, plants, and other natural objects. One horde or clan is named after the toucan, another after another species of large bird, another after a species of palm, another after the sun, and another after the wind. [14] Similarly the Uainuma on the same river are divided into families or clans, all taking their names from animals or plants. Two of them are called after two different kinds of palm, another after the trumpeter bird (*Psophia crepitans*), another after the jaguar, and so on. [15] There is little doubt that these

statements refer to a belief among these Indians in the transmigration of human souls into animals, plants, and inanimate objects. They also show us the beginning of a totemic social system in so far as a whole group of related people stand supposedly in a special relationship to a certain animal or plant from which they take their name.

The same may be said of the Salivas on the Orinoco, among whom one tribe claimed to be descended from the earth, others from trees, and others from the sun. [16] The Uaupés Indians in North-West Brazil also have tribes with names like the following: *Ananas*, "Pine-apples", *Piraiuru*, "The mouth of the fish *piraia*", *Pisa*, "Net", *Carapana*, "Mosquito", *Tapiira*, "Tapir", *Uaracu*, a fish, *Tucandera*, "Black Ant", *Jacami*, "Trumpeter bird", *Miriti*, "Mauritia palm", *Taiassu*, "Pig Indians", *Tucanos*, "Toucans", *Uacarras*, "Herons", *Ipecas*, "Ducks", *Coua*, "Wasps", *Tatu*, "Armadillo", [17], etc. It is a common custom among the South American Indians to name individual persons after animals and plants, and although the present-day Indians do not always attach a special meaning to these names, they unquestionably point to an underlying belief, perhaps forgotten nowadays, in a close relationship between man and the lower creation. When an entire group of men, closely related, is named after a special animal or plant, as is the case among the Uaupés Indians and several other primitive Indian tribes, such a nomenclature may doubtless be taken as an indication of totemism. At the same time, the corresponding clan organization may be vague and loose, as is generally the case in South America.

Among the few tribes in South America which seem to have a fully developed totemic system are the Goajiros in Colombia and the Arawaks in Guiana. They are divided into a great number of exogamous clans with names taken from animals and plants. According to Mr. Simons, the totem clans of the Goajiros all draw their names from animals such as the tiger, the rabbit, the peccary, the vulture, the hawk, the dog, the stork, the owl, the rattlesnake, the fox, etc.—*i.e.* from animals which play a rôle in the religion and superstition of the Indians in many parts of South America. At the time when Mr. Simons wrote his article on the Goajiros, nearly fifty years ago, there were, altogether, about thirty odd castes much like the ancient "clans" of Scotland. Of these, Simons was able to discover

the names of twenty-two. The remainder were insignificant, little-known castes, chiefly inhabiting the hills. There are now about ten of importance, chief among them the Urianas. This, the largest caste in the Goajira, has split up into many ramifications, such as Uriana tiger, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), Uriana lizard. With the exception of a few small local tribes, the other castes are distributed in the greatest confusion throughout the length and breadth of the land. Moreover, the Goajira clans appear to be exogamous, with descent in the female line. [18] The Swedish traveller, G. Bolinder, a more recent visitor, states that they are divided into only fourteen clans, which claim descent on the mother's side. Each clan has a mystical connection with some eponymic animal. The larger clans are subdivided into smaller clans, each of which likewise takes its name from some animal. [19] Be that as it may, the Goajiros clearly have totemism of a typical kind, but, judging from the evidence, its significance is chiefly social, not religious.

We know a little more about the totemic system of the Arawaks, notably through the investigations carried out by Sir Everard F. Im Thurn. About fifty of their numerous clans have been discovered, the names of which are drawn from native animals and plants. Among animal clans there are the deer, the black monkey (*Ateles beelzebub*), the redbreast bird (*Leistes americana*), "one of the commonest and most striking in the coast region of Guiana", the tortoise, the rat, the mocking-bird (also one of the most prominent in the district), the coriaki parrot, the bee, the armadillo, the hawk, the razor-grinder, "an insect remarkable for the extraordinary loud sound with which it makes the forest resound", and the night-jar, or goat-sucker, a bird of which there are many species in Guiana, all of which are "more or less remarkable for the extraordinary cries with which they make night hideous." [20]

As to the origin of these names, Sir Everard Im Thurn could do no more than establish that the Arawaks—or at least some of them—believed that each family was descended from its eponymic animal, bird, or plant, and that most of these eponymic objects were those in some way prominent in Indian life. [21] The statement that each family or clan was supposed to be "descended" from the animal or plant after which it was named certainly implies that it was totemic in character.

At the same time it indicates a relationship between them and their eponymic animal or plant which can be satisfactorily explained only with the theory of metempsychosis. The Arawaks undoubtedly believed that the spirits of their ancestors had inhabited these natural objects, and that after death they too would be changed into the same objects. Such superstitious ideas, inspired by an insect like the razor-grinder, or a bird like the night-jar, which through their strange cries awaken feelings of awe in the Indians, are easy to understand. About other animals from which the Arawak clans took their names, such as the deer, the monkey, the parrot, and the armadillo, we know that many tribes in tropical South America believed them to be reincarnated with the spirits of the dead.

A third people in South America among whom we find fully developed totemism are the Araucanians. According to information we possess about them, they have the idea, characteristic of all truly totemic peoples, that the souls of a group of kindred persons are always thought to enter after death into one and the same kind of animal. In this way, it seems to me, we must interpret the statement of the Jesuit, Father Falkner, according to which the Araucanians had a multiplicity of deities, "each of whom they believed to preside over one particular caste or family of Indians. . . . Some make themselves of the caste of the tiger, some of the lion, some of the guanaco, and others of the ostrich, etc. They imagine that these deities have each their separate habitations—in vast caverns, under the earth, beneath some lake, hill, etc.—and that, when an Indian dies, his soul goes to live with the deity who presides over his particular family." [22] Falkner's statement refers to those Araucanians who lived on the Argentine pampa in the eighteenth century and whom he calls Moluches. But the same ideas were held by the Araucanians of Chile. Father Rosales, who lived for more than thirty years among these Indians, states that when a child was born they drank to its health, "calling it by the name which they had given it on account of its descent. Some are of the descent of the lions, some of that of the tigers, some of that of the eagles, and of other birds; others have the names of fishes, trees, stones, plants." [23] The real character of the animal spirits with which the newborn child was associated must be looked

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at in the light of the ideas commonly held in South America about animals such as the jaguar, the lion or puma, the deer, etc., as well as about birds and fishes and even inanimate objects of nature.

It is a remarkable fact that some Indian tribes of South America, the Arawaks in Guiana, for instance, imagine not only that they are descended from certain animals and plants, but also from inanimate objects like rocks and stones, into which the souls of their dead kinsmen are believed to transmigrate. These natural objects tend consequently to become totems, and in fact there are traces of such a belief in South America. Numerous legends, current all over Guiana and on the Orinoco, tell, for example, about men transformed into stones, about rocks that are the "ancestors" of certain tribes, and so on. A French traveller relates that the Atorais, an Arawak tribe, believed certain enormous blocks of granite to be some of their local warriors who had been changed into stone after death. [24] According to Dr. W. Roth, the Mapoyas, the Salivas, and the Otomacs, all three Orinoco tribes, also had beliefs of this nature. The Otomacs used to say that a stone, made up of three parts and arranged in the form of a pyramid upon the summit of a high promontory of rocks called Barraguan, was their earliest ancestress; also that another remarkable rock, which served as summit to another pinnacle, two leagues distant, was their first ancestor. Being consistent, they thought that all the rocks and stones of which the said Barraguan was formed were each a predecessor of theirs. [25] We are told of the Otomacs, moreover, that although they buried their dead, they dug up the skulls at the end of a year and placed them in and among the crevices and holes between the rocks and stones of the promontory mentioned. They expected them in their turn to change into stone. The idea of the Otomacs and some other Indians that "after death the body or skeleton itself is turned into stone, and so reverts to the very material from which some of them believed it to have originally sprung" [26], is interesting. It reveals a primitive mode of thought which lies also at the bottom of totemism. The same idea is encountered in Peru, where individual persons and even whole nations were supposed to have been converted into stone by the Creator. Certain stone pillars of peculiar shape were looked upon as petrified men

and women in Tiahuanaco and other places. Moreover, the different Aymara tribes seem to have commonly believed that their first ancestors had risen either from certain fountains and lakes, or from caves and clefts in certain rocks of extraordinary size. [27]

Animistic ideas like these may help us to understand how a social system like totemism has originated. Of the numerous theories set forth to explain totemism, I shall consider the only one presented by Sir James Frazer. Concluding his survey of the totemic beliefs and practices among different lower races, he tries to explain this primitive system of thought by what he calls the conceptional theory, based essentially on the primitive notion of conception and childbirth. The ultimate source of totemism, according to Sir James Frazer, must be sought in primitive man's ignorance of the physical processes by which man and animals reproduce their kind, and in particular in his ignorance of the male rôle. In the Bank's Islands many people identify themselves with certain animals or fruits, believing that they partake of their character. They think that their mothers were impregnated by the entrance into the womb of spirit animals or spirit fruits, and that they are, in fact, merely the particular animal or plant which effected conception and in due time was born with a superficial and deceptive resemblance to a human being. Sir James Frazer holds that this primitive belief solves all problems connected with totemism. [28] But, apart from the bold generalization that it implies—from one single instance conclusions are drawn as to the origin of a world-wide institution—it is open also to other objections.

Firstly, what is the true nature of the spirit which is believed to gain entrance into the woman's body in the way described? Since Sir James Frazer rejects the theory by which totemism is derived from the doctrine of metempsychosis, his opinion evidently is that this spirit is not a human soul temporarily incarnated in an animal or plant, but a special animal or plant spirit which, after passing into the woman, is born into the world "with a superficial and deceptive resemblance to a human being." This being so, it is hard to understand what it is that induces animals or plants, or their spirits, regularly to seek entrance into women's bodies, nor why they should be born into the world in *human* form. Being real animal or

plant spirits, they ought naturally to be born as animals and plants, and not as human beings.

But the whole question takes on a different aspect when we consider that—as far as one may venture to generalize on the ideas of the lower peoples—savage animism has little familiarity with a particular animal or plant spirit as distinct from a human soul. All those mysterious spirits which are believed to direct the animals and animate the plants, and even to inhabit lifeless things, are seen on closer analysis to be merely human souls that have temporarily or permanently assumed such shapes. More correctly speaking, there is really only one kind of spirit which takes the shape of men, animals, plants, or inorganic objects, according to the bodies or things inhabited for the time being. Totemism certainly assumes a peculiar primitive idea of conception; but to understand it fully we ought not only to take into account the savage man's idea of conception, but his whole theory of generation and descent. It will then appear that the spirit believed to have entered into the woman through the miraculous conception is only an Indian ancestor who has been reborn in one of his descendants, having meanwhile been incarnated in an animal, plant, or some other natural object.

To the savage in general, birth and death have not the same radical importance as to civilized man; rather are they merely two transitional moments in the history of the living beings and neither mean an absolute beginning nor an absolute end. When a child is born, this life is not a new life in the strict sense of the word. A spirit existing earlier in human form has again assumed that form: it is simply one of the forefathers reappearing in the newborn.

On the other hand, when an Indian dies he does not by any means cease to exist. Death does not imply the extinction of life, it only means transition from one form of existence to another. In the moment of death the soul is temporarily released from the bonds of the visible material frame. Thereafter it may freely hover about in the air or in the neighbourhood of the grave; it may rise to the heavens and transmigrate into the sun, the moon, the stars; it may operate in some natural phenomenon like thunder; or it may again materialize in some natural object on earth, an animal, a plant, a mountain, a rock, a lake, and so forth. But the soul's stay in these objects

is only temporary. It expects to reassume human form, and in due course is reborn in one of the descendants of the Indian man or woman whose body it animated earlier. Thus human life, in including a part of animal and plant life, presents an eternal circular course with apparently no beginning and no end, and changing only in the successive incarnations and transformations through which the soul has to pass.

The existence of this view can be shown both by direct and indirect evidence, in regard, for instance, to such peoples as the Indians of North and South America and the Australians, *i.e.* peoples that have totemism in its most typical form.

Among other things, clear indications of it are found in the American Indian system of name-giving. According to primitive belief, the soul of a person is inherent in his name. Consequently, when the Indians name their children after animals, plants, even after inanimate natural objects like mountains, rocks, rivers, and lakes, as was the habit, for instance, in ancient Peru and Guiana, this custom must have a deeper foundation. It must have originated in the idea that the soul of the ancestor, reborn in the child, was previously incarnated or materialized in some of these objects. From this point of view we can understand why the Indians commonly name their children after animals or plants, and at the same time after their ancestors. It is remarkable that, in North America, the idea of reincarnation appears most marked among those very peoples who have totemism in its most highly developed form.

Thus the Tlingits, Haidas, and other peoples in the north-western part of the continent firmly believe that dead persons come to life again in newborn children of their own family or clan. The Tlingit children, one is told, usually bear two names, one from the mother's family, another from the father's. It is given ceremonially at a great feast in memory of the dead; and many Tlingits who are not able to celebrate it lack entirely this second name. We are told, moreover, that when a pregnant woman dreams of a dead relative the Tlingits think that the soul of the deceased has entered into her and will be born again. And when a newborn child resembles a dead kinsman or kinswoman, they conclude that it is the dead person who has come to life again, and accordingly give it his or her name.

The Tlingits not only believe that the dead are reborn in men and women, but also take steps to facilitate their rebirth.

Thus, when a beloved person dies, the relatives often take the nail from the little finger of the right hand and a lock of hair from the right side of the head and put them into the belt of a young girl of the clan who has just reached maturity. Afterwards she has to lead a very quiet life for eight months and fast for as many days. After her fast is over and just before she eats, she prays that the dead person might be born again from her. [29]

The same idea of the transmigration of souls prevails among the Haidas. They think that the soul of a dead ancestor is often reborn in the person of one of his descendants. Whenever this is supposed to have happened, the newborn child naturally receives the name of the ancestor or ancestress who has come to life again in him or her. The medicine-men or shamans profess to learn in a dream or vision the name of the person who has just been reincarnated, and the infant is named accordingly. They believe that a man is always reborn into his own clan, and generally into his own family. A raven man, for instance, always comes to life again as a raven, never as an eagle; and similarly, however often an eagle man might die and be reborn, at each reincarnation he would still be an eagle to the end of time. Of the Tinnehs or Dénés, Father Petitot observes that "the ancient faith in metempsychosis and the transmigration of souls is deeply rooted in a great number of tribes. It is usually the little children born with one or two teeth who pass for persons resuscitated or reincarnated. The Hurons shared the same belief. According to Malte-Brun they buried their little ones beside the paths in order that women who passed might receive their souls and bring them afresh into the world. This power of reincarnation is by the Dénés extended equally to animals. [30]

This theory of descent is connected with a peculiar primitive theory of conception of which many traces can be found among the South American Indians. There is probably no tribe to-day which is not aware, in a general way, of the connection between sexual intercourse and pregnancy. In regard, however, to the course of conception itself they have curious ideas. According to the original belief of the Indians, which is still seen quite clearly in some primitive tribes, and which, among other things, has given rise to a custom like couvade, *man* is the bearer of the eggs which, to express it simply and briefly,

he puts into the woman at the sexual act and which she hatches during pregnancy, just as the earth receives the seed sown in it. This is the idea which K. von den Steinen found among the Xingu tribes, Dr. W. Roth among the Guiana Indians, and I myself among the Jibaros of Ecuador [31], and we may assume that it expresses a general Indian view. Thus the foundation of a new human being is laid in a physical sense. Evidently it is not thought that man transfers his own soul to the new being. The animating principle in the child engendered must come from outside in some way. The act of conception, according to the Indian view, clearly implies that the embryo, with its true origin in the father, is associated in a mysterious way with an ancestral soul which has previously perhaps been lodged in an animal, a plant, a rock, a heavenly body, or some other inanimate object. From this association of body and soul a new human being arises who is consequently a part of the parent more in the physical than in the spiritual nature, and this primarily of the father. [32]

Very similar ideas seem to prevail among the Australian aborigines, at any rate some of them. In a previous chapter I dealt with those mysterious magical instruments called *churinga*, and pointed out their close connection with the ancestral spirits and totems of the tribes of Central Australia. During that remote antiquity which the Arunta, for instance, call Alcheringa, their ancestors went into the ground, each carrying his *churinga* with him. His body died, but some natural feature, such as a rock or tree, arose to mark the spot, while his spirit part remained in the *churinga*. The spirit individual, regarded as the reincarnation of an Alcheringa ancestor, expects to be reborn by entering into a woman who happens to pass that spot. The child she conceives, no matter where born, receives the totem of that locality.

It is evident, Spencer and Gillen conclude, that the totemic system of the Arunta and other Central Australian tribes "is based upon the idea of the reincarnation of Alcheringa ancestors, who were the actual transformations of animals and plants, or of such inanimate objects as clouds or water, fire, wind, sun, moon, and stars. To the Australian native there is no difficulty in the assumption that an animal or a plant could be transformed directly into a human being, or that the spirit part which he supposes it to possess, just as he does in his own case,

could remain, on the death of the animal, associated with such an object as a *churinga*, and at some future time arise in the form of a human being." [33]

According to Spencer and Gillen, "the fundamental feature of the totemism of the Central Australians is that each individual is the direct reincarnation of an Alcheringa ancestor, or of the spirit part of some Alcheringa animal which carried a *churinga*, and the spirit associated with which became, so to speak, humanized, and consequently entered a woman and was born in human form." [34] The natives account for this fact by creating a series of myths according to which they are the direct descendants of the animal or plant in question.

It seems evident to me, for instance, that totemism in the New World and in Australia—and the same could be shown of the African Bantu tribes—is based on fundamentally the same ideas, the idea of the reincarnation of ancestral souls in animals, plants, and inanimate objects, and a peculiar primitive theory of conception, of which there are still several direct or indirect traces. Sir James Frazer rejects this explanation of the origin of totemism, among other things, on the ground that, according to his opinion, the doctrine of the reincarnation of the dead is unknown "to most, if not all, of the North American Indians."

This assertion is clearly contradicted by the facts already mentioned about the Tlingits, Haidas, and other Indians of North-West America. Belief in the transmigration of souls forms in reality a fundamental dogma of Indian religion both in North and in South America. Sir James Frazer himself illustrates it with several instances. As far as it concerns totemism this belief means, on the one hand, that the members of a clan are descended from the animal from which the clan takes its name, and further, that after death its members are transformed back into the ancestral animal. There is no doubt that this idea underlies totemism in North America, although in some tribes, those of North-west America for instance, we find now only a few traces of it. Nevertheless, although the Tlingits, for instance, think that in their transmigrations the souls of men and animals are restricted to their own species, so that a man will be born again as a man, a wolf as a wolf, a raven as a raven, and so on, they consider the members of a clan to be related in some way to their totemic

animal. For example, members of the Wolf clan will pray to the wolves, "We are your relations; pray don't hurt us." [35]

The relation in which different clans are supposed to stand to their totems is set forth more clearly, however, in some other cases. We are told of the Omahas in the state of Nebraska, for instance, that they once performed the following ceremony at the death of a member of the Black Shoulder or Buffalo clan. The dying person, whether man or woman, was wrapped in a buffalo robe with the hair removed, and his or her face painted with the privileged decoration. Thus arrayed and decorated, the dying man or woman was addressed as follows: "You are going to the animals (the buffaloes). You are going to rejoin your ancestors. You are going, or, your four souls are going, to the four winds. Be strong!" Members of the Hangga clan, also a Buffalo clan, performed a similar ceremony over one of their number at the point of death. They wrapped him in a buffalo robe, painted him with the traditional lines, and said to him: "You came hither from the animals and you are going back thither. Do not face this way again. When you go, continue walking." [36] Sir James Frazer remarks himself that "taken in connection with the legends that these two Buffalo clans are descended from buffaloes, these death ceremonies plainly point to a belief that dead members of the clans were transformed back into the ancestral animals, the buffaloes." [37]

To sum up—the above ideas which, far from being the exception in the lower cultures, may probably be regarded as characteristic of the primitive mode of thought, help us to solve the most important problems in connection with totemism. If savages really believe that the soul, after leaving one body, and before being reborn in another, has in the meantime passed through some other form of existence, being reincarnated, for instance, as an animal or a plant, it is easy to understand why certain groups of people should claim kinship with these natural objects. If within a definite group of kindred individuals, or clan, the belief exists or has once existed that, from time immemorial, the souls of departed kinsmen on leaving the body have passed into a certain animal or plant, and been at last reborn in some of their descendants, this clan naturally thinks it is descended from that particular animal or plant and, in a sense, revere it as an ancestor. In other words,

totemism can only arise where the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is brought into a regular system, a definite relationship being established between a whole group of kindred people and a particular species of animal or plant. If this is so, there are naturally primitive peoples who believe in the reincarnation of the dead in animals and plants without having as yet developed a totemic system.

The particular social organization and the exogamous rules to which totemism gives rise do not concern us here. Again, as to the religious and magical ceremonies which form the other aspect of it, they will be touched upon in that part of my work which deals with practical religion.

## CHAPTER IX

### SPIRITS, DEMONS, GHOSTS

**I**N the survey of animistic ideas current in the lower cultures given in the previous chapters, we have already, in a sense, been confronted with primitive demonology. However, those mysterious spiritual beings which are thought to inhabit animals and plants, mountains and rocks, gloomy caves, rapid rivers and cataracts, or which act in phenomena like thunder and lightning, become demons in the proper sense of the word only when associated with and regarded as the causes of *incidents* deeply concerned with the welfare and destiny of man. Looking at the matter from a psychological point of view, we realize that here, in fact, we have the most important source of the belief in a supernatural world. What is Divine is primarily that which interferes in a mysterious way with the destiny of man. Even fetishes become objects of religious significance only after they have been associated with remarkable incidents.

At this point we have to deal with another interesting feature in the psychology of primitive man, namely, his theory about the wider domain of causation; in other words, his ideas concerning occurrences for which no apparent productive agencies are discoverable.

Originally, man was led by a purely practical motive to reflect upon and try to find out the causes of events occurring in the external world. To speculate theoretically about things which do not affect him does not occur to him; but should his welfare be threatened, should one of his fellow-tribesmen meet with a sudden death or he himself or one of his family be attacked by a painful disease or experience some other unexpected evil, then his attention is excited. His very instinct of self-preservation will lead him to form a theory about the cause of the accident so that he may know how to overcome and prevent, if possible, the recurrence of the evil. In many cases the cause may be immediately apparent. If, for instance,

a savage is killed by lightning or crushed by a falling tree or a stone coming loose from a rock, his comrades see clearly that the accident was due to the action of a bad spirit residing in the clouds, the tree, or the rock; their only trouble then is to discover the reason of his anger and the means of appeasing him.

But the origin of evil happenings is not always so clear. The two common phenomena of life, *disease* and *death*, for instance, appear to primitive man as mystic riddles in most cases. On this point we can do no better than study his peculiar theory of causation. Even to the modern savage it seems almost incomprehensible that there should exist such a thing as death. "The notion of necessity being quite unknown to the savage," says the explorer von den Steinen, speaking of the primitive Indians in Central Brazil, "it is almost impossible for him to understand that man, like every living being, must sooner or later fall into decay. When he repeated to his teacher the sentence, 'everybody must die', he doubtfully shook his head. It appeared to him almost the same thing as if somebody should say to us, 'everybody must be murdered.' Only in the light of malicious mischief does the Indian see the cause of death." [1]

I found similar experiences among the Indians I visited. Thus the Jibaro Indian does not realize that there should be such a thing as natural death. In his natural state the Indian undoubtedly realizes that death is due to the destruction of the body and to the positive separation of the animating principle from it, but he cannot formulate an exact theory as to the causes of this radical change. To him death is always something unintelligible, unnatural, and accidental; in each case it must have a special cause. More strictly speaking, it can be due only to the malicious machinations either of another man or of a supernatural being. The strong young chonta-palm does not fall to the ground unless the axe is put to its root, or the violent hurricane breaks its stem, or some other external force causes its destruction. Just as little will a powerful man, in the prime of life, die except at the direct or indirect instigation of an open or secret enemy.

At least theoretically, therefore, the Indian seems to acknowledge natural death in very old persons, whose bodily frame falls into decay, obeying the same natural law as the huge

tree of the virgin forest, rotted with age. Practically, however, they seldom if ever recognize such cases. It is interesting to note that, even in regard to decrepit men of seventy or eighty, the usual theory of witchcraft as the immediate cause of the catastrophe is nearly always adhered to, especially when the symptoms answer to the ideas held about this kind of evil.

In the same way, when an Australian aborigine of New South Wales is killed in a battle or crushed to death by the falling branch of a tree or dies from some other visible cause, his comrades do not wonder. The manner of his death was manifest. But quite otherwise is it when a man sickens and dies from no obvious influence: then the cause is ascribed to some hidden malevolence either on the part of evil spirits or of some wicked wizard. [2] In the New Hebrides, unless the person is very old or the cause of death is very obvious, the natives generally attribute death to an evil spirit called "Semi", who poisons people. [3] Much the same view prevails among the natives of New Mecklenburg, who look upon the death of very old persons, no longer able to work and support themselves, as a natural occurrence, but on the other hand regard the death of young people as the result of witchcraft. [4] In Africa too, among the natives of the Gold Coast, for instance, death is attributed directly to the actions of men or to invisible powers. If a man is shot by another man, the cause of death appears obvious to the negro. But should a man be drowned, or crushed by a falling tree in the forest, this would not be called an accident. In fact, when on the Gold Coast a man is drowned, his comrades say: an evil spirit (the local deity of the river or sea where the accident occurred) has taken him. [5] In the same way the Cherokees of North America in ancient times had no conception of a natural death. They universally ascribed the death of those who perished by disease to the intervention or agency of evil spirits or witches who had some connection with them. [6]

An interesting example of the way in which savages combine cause and effect and arrive at a theory as to the cause of an accident comes from South Africa. A Koussa-chief had broken off a piece of an anchor belonging to a wrecked ship. When he died, soon afterwards, the anchor was looked upon as the cause of his death, because it had been irreverently treated by him; it was consequently worshipped as a fetish. [7]

Most uncivilized peoples, although never failing to ascribe disease to supernatural causes, make an important distinction as to these causes which must be particularly shown. The ideas of the South American Indians seem typical on this point. The Jibaro Indians distinguish definitely between what they call witchcraft (*tunchi*) and "disease" (*sungura*). *Tunchi*, properly speaking, signifies the "arrow", the small material object which the sorcerers throw at their enemies to kill them. The illness it causes is peculiar to Indians. It would not take effect on a white man. The Indians even declare that the whites do not comprehend at all the thing they call *tunchi*. The symptoms of this mysterious evil, however, are quite characteristic. When the Indian's entire body aches or he feels intensive pains in some part of it, especially if these are accompanied by a corresponding swelling and the illness is quite sudden, he is convinced that he has been bewitched. Headache and rheumatic pains—pains which even civilized people still call "fairy dart", *Hexenschuss*, etc.—suppurating wounds, colic accompanied by a swelling of the stomach, painful diseases of the heart and the liver are typical evils caused by witchcraft.

On the other hand, in the category of "disease" (*sungura*) are included most illnesses not specially connected with pains and which the Indians have caught from the whites, above all fever and infectious diseases such as small-pox, scarlet fever, dysentery, and venereal diseases. Whereas the Indian medicine-men are frequently able to cure witchcraft sent by other medicine-men, they are entirely powerless against disease imported by the whites. Thus when an epidemic of small-pox—a disease which at times has made terrible ravages among the natives of South America—breaks out in an Indian village, the inhabitants can generally see no other way of ridding themselves of the evil other than that of leaving the village for some time or for ever. Under such circumstances, it is easy to understand, when a strange white man arrives at their village, the anxiety with which the savage Indians always ask whether he "brings disease" with him. [8]

I have shown before that the evil of witchcraft, although appearing in the form of a material object, is in fact thought to be caused by a demoniacal being embodied in that object. Similarly, according to Indian belief, "disease" (*sungura*) is

caused by a mysterious spirit, namely, the spirit of a white man. Usually the Indians can say no more about this strange spirit than that it simply "carries away" people; nor do they know any other way of protecting themselves against his visitations other than avoiding the place where he rages.

On the other hand, there is also among the Indians a kind of "disease" which is endemic and which they thus knew before the white man arrived. This kind of *sungura*, according to the belief of the Jibaros, arises directly from their own evil spirits, called *iguanchi*. To this category belongs, above all, malarial fever, to which the Indians fall victim even more easily than white people. Malaria, therefore, is not, as such, the result of witchcraft. But so strong is the mania of these Indians for connecting almost everything in one way or another with witchcraft, that the wizards are supposed to have a certain influence even upon the evil termed "disease". They are believed, for instance, by means of their "arrows" and imprecations, to be able to keep an epidemic ceaselessly raging in a village so that the inhabitants are ultimately exterminated. Since demons, as senders of supernatural evils, always get the better of living men, even the most experienced sorcerers, the medicine-men generally, also profess their inability to cure that kind of "disease" sent by the *iguanchi*. [9]

Closely connected with witchcraft is the kind of malady brought about by a person's soul being stolen, either by a sorcerer or a demon. This point of view explains, for instance, the dread of being photographed displayed by the savage Indians, a phenomenon known to all travellers in South America. The Indians, who generally regard the white stranger as a potent sorcerer, believe that with his camera he takes the soul of the person photographed, with the result that he will soon die. The photograph itself is regarded as the soul and is usually named with the same word that denotes "soul". The one who possesses the photograph is consequently supposed to be able to work evil at will upon the person it represents.

To "lose the soul", in general, means the same thing as to die. Even the evil spirits the Jibaro call *iguanchi* frequently kill persons, especially sick persons, by robbing their souls or enticing them to leave the body. While the person lies in his bed the demon appears to him in a dream, speaking to him and singing a seductive song, trying to make his soul

follow him to his mysterious habitations in the forest. If the soul follows the demon to the wood, the fate of the patient is sealed and he will die.

Ideas of this kind are found among all South American Indians, who therefore resort to various theories to account for different kinds of bodily evils. Although adhering generally to the theory of witchcraft, the Chaco Indians even still recognize other causes of disease and death, depending on the nature of the evil. Thus the spirits of the departed are believed to be a direct cause of death. A very realistic idea is held by the tribes of the river Pilcomayo, the Chorotis, Tobas, and others. They fancy that a recently dead husband may cause his surviving wife to fall ill and die by seizing her by the hair. He does so simply because he is longing for her company and wants her to follow him to the grave. This is the reason why widows always shave off their hair after the death of a husband. [10]

I need hardly point out that there is no real contradiction in these different theories. Death may have various causes, and illnesses are classified differently according to their symptoms. It is interesting to note, moreover, that exactly the same theories about sickness and death are found among uncivilized peoples all over the world, although one people may prefer to resort to the theory of witchcraft as the origin of disease and death, and another to the theory that these evils are sent, or in some way directly caused, by evil spirits, in certain cases by spirits or souls of the departed.

One need not illustrate here these world-wide beliefs with many instances. The mysterious supernatural evil which the Arunta of Central Australia call *arunquulta* seems to be almost exactly identical with what the Jibaros call *tunchi*, although the Australian term perhaps has a wider application. Spencer and Gillen state that it has a vague meaning, but is always associated at bottom with the possession of supernatural power. The word *arunquulta* is applied indiscriminately either to the evil influence or to the object in which it lives temporarily or permanently. The object may be a piece of wood, bone, or stone, the presence of which is believed to be causing the injury or pain, just as the magical "arrow" is conceived in South America. Similarly the Australians imagine that the material object is the embodiment of an evil spirit by whom

the patient is possessed. The main business of the medicine-man is to extract the object by sucking and other manipulations. [11]

The Papuans of New Guinea have, too, the same theories of illness as the primitive Indians: illness is caused either by sorcery or directly by some spiritual being. Thus the spirits of the dead, who are greatly feared, are in some cases known to carry away the souls of living people and also to send illness. Different is the theory which ascribes death to sorcery or witchcraft. According to this theory, illness is caused by a bone or some other material object which has been shot into a person's body; the medicine-man removes the evil by sucking the sick spot. [12] The Malays also have knowledge of a sickness caused by an evil spirit embodied in a small splinter of bone, a thorn, a few hairs, or some other magical object which has been introduced into the patient's body by secret magical means and is believed to cause his pains. The Milanau of North-West Borneo attribute all symptoms of illness to the operation of malevolent spirits who have possessed the patient. It would never occur to them to look for the explanation in unsuitable food, for instance, or from physiological cause. The only way of curing the sick person is by making a sacrifice or exorcising the evil spirit tormenting him. But, besides this theory of possession, the Malays of Indonesia commonly believe that maladies are, in a more general way, *sent* by spirits, more or less powerful, and especially by ancestral spirits, whose anger in such cases has to be placated by offerings. [13]

These same theories of illness are met with in Africa, among the Bantu tribes, for instance, in the south and east of the continent. According to the Kafirs, sickness may be due to the interference of ancestral spirits, who send it to show their displeasure with the people of the kraal. If the diviner or witch doctor decides that the true cause of the sickness lies in the action of ancestral spirits, he will order a sacrifice for the propitiation of these powers. At least equally common is the other diagnosis, namely, that the suffering of the patient is due to witchcraft. Dudley Kidd states that in this respect the practices of the Kafirs are on one point exactly analogous to those, for instance, of the Indians of South America and the aborigines of Australia: thorns, beetles, worms, frogs, and other things are supposed to be the cause of disease, the cure

consequently being effected by sucking out the strange object from the seat of pain. [14]

Again, Dr. Lindblom states of the Akamba of East Africa that, according to their belief, illnesses are caused in three ways: by the spirits who for some reason are angry with the living, or by black magic on the part of some evil-disposed person, or by real illnesses contracted in a natural way. The last cause seems to be regarded as the least usual, but on the other hand the "sucking cure" seems to be seldom practised nowadays. We hear, however, of the Kikuyu, a tribe living north of the Akamba, that "the medicine-man sucks different objects out of the sick person's stomach, e.g. glass beads, grass, leaves, and other rubbish, put there by some enemy"—a typical case of witchcraft treated by the "sucking cure." [15]

Surveying now the ideas prevailing in quite a different part of the world, the arctic peoples of Northern Europe and Siberia, we find that these peoples account for sickness in much the same way, ascribing it partly to witchcraft, partly to the direct operation of evil spirits. The ideas and customs of the ancient Lapps are of great interest. According to the statements of early travellers, the ancient Lapp, when he wished to harm an enemy living in the neighbourhood or at a distance, used to take a miniature bow and arrow made of reindeer's horn. He then made an image of his enemy. If he wanted to paralyze his hand only, he shot at the hand of the image with a pointless arrow; but if he wished to wound him or cause him a serious internal ailment, he shot at the image with a pointed arrow. The "arrow of the *noida*" (name of the Lappish witch doctor) was called *gand* by the Lapps, and later was also thought to have the form of a venomous insect. Another name used for it was *noidendirri*. Both these names are of Scandinavian origin [16], and there is in fact little doubt that the Lapps had been influenced on this point by their Scandinavian neighbours, from whom they borrowed so many cultural elements in former times.

I wish to call attention, however, to the interesting analogy existing here between the Lapps and the South American Indians. Thus the tribes of the Rio Ucayali and other Indians of western Amazonas frequently use small bows and arrows for the purpose of bewitching other people. Similarly, many tribes in the Amazon region use a miniature bow and arrow

in practising venesection, which plays an important rôle in their medical art. [17] If a mysterious pain or ailment suddenly befalling man is explained as an arrow-shot discharged by a human wizard or an evil spirit, one can understand the Indians trying to counteract the effects of this "magic shot" by using the same sort of weapon as the evil demon himself.

Among the other uncultured peoples of Russia and Northern Siberia ideas of this kind are not so common, but are by no means lacking. The information given by our authors as to the methods of practising witchcraft are on the whole scanty. Thus the Tsheremisses not only have diviners and magicians who try to help other people by averting misfortune, but also others who try to ruin the life and luck of their fellow-tribesmen by their magic art. These evil sorcerers are called *lokteze*, which means "ruiner", "destroyer". [18] Their existence proves that witchcraft of the same kind as that known to many primitive peoples was practised by the half-civilized Tsheremisses.

In the Siberian shamanism the witchcraft-theory of disease plays an important part, as well as the theory which explains it from direct spiritual influence. Among the shamans there are not only those who practise "white" magic, but also those thought to harm other people by "black" or nefarious magic, carried out in alliance with the evil spirits. Consequently, one of the functions of the professional shaman is to expel by his conjuration the evil demon who has penetrated into the body of the patient. Since the evil frequently appears in the form of a material object, it is often extracted by sucking the seat of pain or by similar manipulations. [19]

Dr. Donner relates a typical case which, according to his informant, took place on the Yenisey in 1927. One of the reindeer belonging to a Tungus-shaman, who lived with a Yenisey-Ostyak couple, had fallen ill while they were travelling in the vicinity of Turukhansk; the animal fell down, blood flowed from its nostrils and it died. When the Tungus stepped out of his sledge and went to examine the reindeer he too was taken ill, blood flowing from his mouth and nose. Apparently lifeless, he was carried at once to another great shaman, who nursed him for a couple of days, using "witchcraft". The shaman drew out of the side of the man an iron arrow of the length of a couple of inches. Thus it was clear to him that it

had been shot off by a great Ostyak-Samoyede shaman living at a place far off from Turukhansk. The same shaman had also shot the reindeer, although the arrow had not been found. [20] This instance of witchcraft has analogies in most parts of the world. In general, the Siberian peoples have two theories about the origin of sickness: according to the one, it is due to possession by an evil spirit sent into the body of the patient by a malevolent shaman; according to the other, it is due to one of his souls having been removed from the body by evil spirits with or without the co-operation of a shaman. It is the business of the professional shaman to find out, by divination, whether in a given case the sickness is due to the first or the second cause and to prescribe the remedies to be used. [21] On the whole, the latter theory is more commonly resorted to. If the soul is abducted by an evil spirit or escapes in some other way, the person, it is believed, is bound to sicken and die. The shaman may prevent this by bringing back the lost soul, having first vanquished the demon who abducted it. Above all else, shamanism means a fight with the evil spirits for the possession of the souls of men. [22] But the idea that sickness may be caused by the loss of the soul is world-wide, being intimately associated with that dualistic theory of man found among all lower races.

Even the idea that disease and death have their origin in the spirits of the departed is extremely common in the lower cultures. It was characteristic of the ancient Finns, for instance, that they should believe that diseases were sent by the spirits of their departed relatives. For one reason or another, these were thought to have grown angry with the survivors, generally on account of duties neglected, or else they might be longing for their company. [23] Dr. Karjalainen states of the Asiatic Ostyaks and Vogules that illnesses are believed to have various causes. They may be sent by the spirits of the dead, who are displeased with their surviving relatives, or by certain local spirits. They come from the under-world. They may even be sent by the gods. But in very many cases they are supposed to be caused by special demons of disease whose sole business it is to do this. In fact, among these peoples each of their most frequent maladies is believed to be caused by a demon of its own who causes it. [24]

However, of all primitive theories of disease the one which ascribes it to "possession" by an evil spirit—brought about, as a

rule, by what is called witchcraft—is evidently the most natural from the point of view of an undeveloped mind. Death is the natural outcome of the work of destruction in process during disease when man is attacked by a malignant spirit who has taken up its abode in his body. A conclusion of this kind must lie within easy reach of a primitive mind which does not grasp either the notion of a natural causality in occurrences, or the notion of cosmic laws familiar to civilized man. Suppose the savage is taken ill with a wasting disease which makes him slowly pine away, or suppose he is tossed and shaken in fever, or tormented and wrenches by some internal suffering, or that he twists and writhes in convulsions. His fellow-tribesmen are not able, of course, to reason out the natural cause of the illness. All they observe is that a fearful and mysterious change has taken place in the patient, a change which cannot have been brought about by itself. If, then, the evil is not known to have been caused by any visible agent, it must have its cause in some invisible malevolent being who has intruded the body of the sick man. In this notion, moreover, the analogy to the human soul lies near at hand. If primitive man had conceived the idea of a human soul as a separate entity, as a second self residing in the body and causing life, the idea must naturally have occurred that the strange mysterious being in temporary possession of the sick man was like that too, although malevolent in character. That the mysterious being may at the same time appear as a seemingly insignificant material object involves for him no contradiction. An acute bodily pain must have a material cause, and with the idea that a spirit may be embodied in a material object he is quite familiar.

It may seem natural to assume, as has indeed been suggested, that the "possession-theory" is the earliest theory of illness conceived by primitive man, and that the theory which ascribes it to the loss of the soul, to the activity of the spirits of the departed, or to some other spiritual intervention, is the result of later speculation. We must take into consideration, however, that whereas there are certain illnesses, above all those accompanied by acute and strictly localized pains, which most naturally for cause suggest the presence of an intruding object in the body, there are others which suggest another diagnosis, that, for instance, of the temporary removal of the soul from the body.

The fact that both theories coexist among many compara-

tively low tribes, such as the Indians of Gran Chaco, indicates that, on the whole, they must be regarded as equally "primitive". Their existence, moreover, in utterly different parts of the world shows that they cannot be explained as the result of "diffusion", but form instances of a parallelism due to the psychic unity of mankind. On the other hand, the idea that illnesses are *sent* or indirectly caused by some malevolent spiritual power or god unquestionably marks a higher conception and belongs to a more advanced stage in the evolution of religious thought.

The "possession-theory" of disease has not been limited to primitive peoples. The Greeks may again be mentioned as a typical example of peoples of ancient civilization who have adhered to it. At an early period of their history, and partly at the height of Hellenic culture, the idea of an occult evil agency behind bodily ills was characteristic of their medical doctrine. Every abnormal condition of body or mind, madness or insanity, the delirium and hallucinations of sick or intoxicated persons, epileptic fits, in fact all kinds of disease, were ascribed by them, as by uncivilized peoples of our own day, to demoniac possession or to supernatural influence of some kind.

Their theory of madness was closely associated with their ideas on divination and prophesy, which will be touched upon later. As to madness, we need only state that, according to the original idea of the Greeks, seen, for instance, in the dialogues of Plato, the "divine" nature of madness was obviously due to the fact that the insane person was "possessed" (*éntheos, katechómenos*) by a supernatural being who caused him to go out of his mind. [25] After the rise of polytheism in historical times, mental disturbances were especially attributed to some of the personal gods, for instance to Pan or Hecate, and above all to Dionysos, who, from being the god of the wine and narcotic spirits, naturally became the god of every mental excitement. Similarly, various bodily sufferings were ascribed by the Greeks to supernatural causes. A disease like epilepsy would tend particularly to give rise to the idea of a possessing demon as its immediate cause. To the Greeks, epilepsy was the "sacred disease" (*hieros nosos*) *par excellence*. In some cases it was ascribed to the moon, but, whether directly or indirectly caused by the moon-deity, it was always believed to be due to demoniac influence. At the time of Hippocrates, in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C., which marked the beginnings of a scientific theory of medicine,

this belief seems to have been a matter of past history, to the Greek physicians at least; but that it was by no means uncommon in certain circles of the population is seen from his works.

Hippocrates begins his treatise *On the Sacred Disease* by the statement that "people have ascribed to it a divine nature and a divine cause on account of their lacking knowledge and the wonder it arouses, being different from other diseases"; hence also, he adds, they try to cure it, not by natural means but by purifications and incantations. The great Hellenic physician realized the fact apparent in regard to primitive religion in general, namely, that ignorance of the true nature of things and events has been the mother of superstition. [26] The same primitive view is even more clearly pointed out by a later writer on medicine, Aretaeus from Kappadokia, who suggests that epilepsy was called a sacred disease because of the belief that it was caused by a demon entering the body of man. [27]

Every attentive reader of the New Testament knows how familiar ideas of this kind were to the Jews at the beginning of the Christian era. This view was inherited by the Christian Church, appearing, for instance, in the writings of the apostolic fathers. The Church was also responsible, in the first place, for the inhumane treatment of insane persons which has been characteristic of European peoples of culture up to the eighteenth century.

The same practical interest which induces primitive man to formulate an idea about the nature of diseases also leads him to seek a cause for other remarkable events, especially unexpected accidents, misfortunes, and losses, the causes of which are not immediately clear to him. By a reasoning similar to that already mentioned, every incident of this kind is ascribed to malevolent spiritual influence; its cause can only be found in a living agent, visible or invisible. This theory of causation is gradually extended to all objects and phenomena of nature, giving rise not only to a general "animistic" view of the world but also to a deep-seated belief in spiritual interference in all human affairs. Writers dealing with the religion of primitive peoples have often touched upon the general belief in spirits and demons as interfering deeply in the practical life of the savage.

With eloquent words Sir James Frazer depicts the "omnipresence of demons" in his *Golden Bough*. "To the imagination of the savage the world still teems with these motley beings

whom a more sober philosophy has discarded. Fairies and goblins, ghosts and demons, still hover about him both waking and sleeping. They dog his footsteps, dazzle his senses, enter into him, harass and deceive and torment him in a thousand freakish and mischievous ways. The mishaps that befall him, the losses he sustains, the pains he has to endure, he commonly sets down, if not to the magic of his enemies, to the spite or anger or caprice of the spirits. Their constant presence wearies him, their sleepless malignity exasperates him; he longs with an unspeakable longing to be rid of them altogether, and from time to time, driven to bay, his patience utterly exhausted, he turns fiercely on his persecutors and makes a desperate effort to chase the whole pack of them from the land, to clear the air of their swarming multitudes, that he may breathe more freely and go on his way unmolested, at least for a time." [28]

This picture, although on the whole correct, is still to a certain degree exaggerated. In this, as in many other respects, the consequences of human superstitions and prejudices are mitigated by the experiences and exigencies of practical life. The mind of the savage is by no means always occupied by thoughts of evil spirits. He does not believe himself to be exposed at every step to their treacherous attacks. What Dudley Kidd observes about the Kafirs, that they "certainly do not live in everlasting dread of spirits, for the chief part of their life is not spent in thinking at all", and that they are "so easy-going that it would seem to them too much burden to be for ever thinking of spirits", may, I believe, be said of most lower peoples. Nevertheless the belief in demons who interfere in human welfare and destiny plays so important a rôle in the practical life of the savage that without knowledge of it we should fail to understand not only their religion, but also many of their customs and institutions.

It would be a tedious task to enumerate instances illustrating this general savage belief in demons as carrying on the operations of nature and affecting the life of man for good or ill. In fact, it has been done by many other writers. It is easily comprehensible that the majority of the supernatural beings by whom the savage imagines himself surrounded are looked upon as by nature positively evil or harmful. This is due to the psychological fact that man always pays more attention to the cruel and destructive powers of nature than to the good and beneficial ones, and that at an early stage the sad experiences of life,

disease, calamity, distress, should have as their primary causes the ideas of spiritual beings. By nature, primitive man is little inclined on the whole to reflect upon the good he enjoys, whereas any ill that befalls him attracts his attention and makes him inquire into its causes. Only misfortunes and sufferings is it that arouse his instinct of self-preservation and compels him to think. If he experiences no disease or ill, if he is successful in everything he undertakes, if he has enough food, he is contented with his existence; but he does not think about his prosperous condition nor regard it as the gift of any superhuman powers. Such a state of things, therefore, could hardly have led him to ascribe the causes of events in the world to invisible spiritual beings, anyhow not to the same degree as evil experiences.

There are statements of ethnologists which bear directly on this point. Thus Im Thurn observes that the Indians of Guiana accept all the good that befalls them either without inquiry as to its cause or as the results of their own exertions. On the other hand, they regard all ills as inflicted by malignant spirits. According to the same writer, this view explains in some measure the fact that, while the Indians believe both in harmless and harmful spirits, the latter are considered specially active in their power of affecting men and other beings; on the contrary, the former are very inactive in this respect. [29] Similarly two well-known authorities on the Indians of Brazil tell us that they do not acknowledge any cause of good or any god, merely an evil principle. This is because everything good entirely escapes their notice, whereas the bitter experiences of life leave an impression. [30] We hear much the same, for instance, of the negroes of West Africa as described by some ethnologists. [31]

Such statements, of course, must not be taken to mean that the religion of the lower tribes is a pure demonology or "devil-worship". It may be doubted whether any savage tribe exists at present which does not, besides the evil spirits, also assume the existence of spirits good and beneficial, and whose religious view may not therefore be said to be to a certain extent dualistic. But to the primitive mind it is not only obvious that the former are far more numerous but also far more active, and that consequently demons play the more important part in practical religion.

That the majority of the spirits are regarded as evil or malevolent is due largely to another fact. The invisible spiritual

beings by whom the savage feels himself surrounded are identical by nature with those countless spirits or souls which formerly inhabited the bodies of men and animals, and who after death were unable to find a permanent abode in other material bodies. These disembodied souls hover about in the air or dwell in the deserts and dark forests; from thence they issue, especially at night, to disturb the peace of men. These demons it is who are at work in those destructive natural phenomena, thunderstorms, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc., which so strongly impress the savage, or which cause public calamities like frost or drought, pestilence, and so on.

Now, it is a well-known fact that the spirits of the dead in general, independent of their character in life, are likely to turn into more or less dangerous, redoubtable, and in certain cases downrightly evil beings who seem to be striving continually to harm the living in every imaginable way. I shall return to this question later and elucidate the causes by which this radical change in the character of the dead is brought about. In this connection I wish only to point out that there are certain categories of spirits which by necessity become malevolent towards the living and are universally regarded with dread by savage peoples. That the spirits of strangers and enemies, for instance, are universally feared and avoided as inimical and revengeful beings needs no demonstration.

Similarly, it seems to be a general rule that spirits of those who have suffered a sudden and violent death, even though they be fellow-tribesmen, are changed into demons. These persons, violently ejected against their will from this earthly life and everything attaching them to it, naturally carry with them to the next world an angry longing for revenge. This is all the more likely to happen since, for many of them, the proper funeral rites are not performed, on which the soul's happiness in the other world so greatly depends. According to the belief of the ancient Finns, the souls changed into demons belonged particularly to people who in life had been evil-doers separated from their kin, but were those souls neglected after death, no sacrifices having been offered them. They were supposed, therefore, to take revenge upon the living by sending them disease. [32]

The belief in demons as being omnipresent, powerful, and influencing the welfare of man has not been a characteristic only of the religion of primitive peoples. It has survived in the

higher cultures, in polytheistic and even in monotheistic religions, giving rise to a more or less dualistic view of the world. In this respect I shall only recall the extent, for instance, to which the religious consciousness of the classical peoples was pervaded by the idea of divine or demoniacal interference in all human affairs. Characteristic from this point of view were the "unlucky" or "inauspicious" days singled out by both Greeks and Romans. The Greeks called them "*apophrádes hemerai*", the Romans *religiosi diei*. The origin of the belief in these "unlucky" or "black" days was probably nothing more than the experiences of life suggesting that special days were presided over by special malevolent supernatural powers. If, on a certain day, a defeat was suffered by the army, or some other calamity occurred fatal to the community, the rashly drawn conclusion was, on that particular day, some evil spirits were at work. [33] Such hasty generalizations are very characteristic of a primitive mind. The Greek who considered a day "unlucky" on which a misfortune happened to occur, reasoned according to the same principle as the savage who makes a "fetish" of anything associated with a remarkable incident.

According to ancient Greek belief, as a matter of fact, there were certain times when the countless supernatural beings who peopled the universe and the under-world were supposed to rise from their latent dwelling-places and swarm over the earth, causing men all sorts of ills and calamities just as the evil spirits once rose up from Pandora's fatal box. One of the strictest laws in ancient Athens was that such a day should be kept holy; no work was to be done, no court or assembly to be held. It was a "day of pollution", a day "not even to be mentioned". To do any work on it was to provoke the evil demons who ruled over it and to bring manifold curses upon the town; hence such a person was called *kakodaimonistes*, "one who invokes the evil demons." [34]

The Romans had a similar belief. A *dies religiosus* was a day when the spirits of the dead (*manes*) were believed to issue forth into the upper world through the *mundus*, the name given to a trench or entrance to a vault in the city of Romulus, looked upon as the gate of Hell. On these days no public business might be undertaken, no battle fought, no army conscripted. This taboo was the same as that on death and corpses. It accounts for the fact that the days of the *Parentalia* in February and those

of the *Lemuria* in May were *religiosi*. They were "days of the souls" the same as those recognized by many other peoples. To the Greeks and the Romans, however, the "religious days" were more particularly the days of *evil* spirits. To the Romans, moreover, the days following the Kalends, the Nones and the Ides of every month were "black" or "unlucky". It was considered unlucky, therefore, for a Roman girl to marry on the Kalends, the Nones and the Ides of any month. The pontiffs had decreed these "black", because whenever the Roman generals petitioned the gods for success in battle on these days, disaster followed. [35]

As one sees, the higher polytheistic and monotheistic religions have by no means been able to suppress the belief in evil spirits and demons as operating in natural phenomena and causing sickness, drought and pestilence, misfortunes, and other evils. On the contrary, they have frequently had the effect of strengthening the belief in the influence of such supernatural agents, beside the influence exerted by the actual gods. Thus demonology formed an integrant part of religious or philosophical systems such as Platonism and Neoplatonism, as represented by men like Plato, Plotinos, Jamblichus, and Porphyry. It was also propagated in the Early Christian Church by such great teachers as Origen, Justinus the Martyr, Tertullianus, and Augustinus. [36] If the doctrines of these Christian Fathers prove that, even for civilized mankind, it has taken centuries to arrive at the notion of immutable laws of nature, we can hardly wonder that the primitive theory of causation referred to in this chapter is still adhered to by uncultured savages.

## CHAPTER X

### " SUPREME BEINGS " OF PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

PRIMITIVE Supreme Beings have been touched upon in passing in a previous chapter. Together with "totemism" and the Melanesian *mana*, there are probably no more misused terms in the modern science of religion than "supreme beings" and "primary monotheism". On this point it is enough to mention that a whole school of anthropologists, the German culture-history school, refuses to recognize as really scientific any other theory as to the origin of religion other than that which makes it originate in pure monotheism.

Consistent with this view, for instance, is that of a recent ethnologist of this school, Gusinde. In a work on the Fuegians, he treats under the heading "Religion" nothing but their supposed "monotheism", expressly excluding from the subject their belief in spirits, whether good or bad, their cult of the dead, invocation and so on. The same view was taken of Australian aboriginal religion by the founder of the modern theory of primary monotheism, Andrew Lang. He tried, moreover, to show that there are similar traces of monotheism among many other races at the most primitive level of culture.

A theory of this kind, of course, tends to attract adherents, especially in theological circles. The best-known representative of the old theory of primary monotheism in ethnology is Father Schmidt, mentioned before in connection with the culture-history school. Father Schmidt and his predecessor Andrew Lang agree in regard to the results arrived at, and mostly in regard to the methods used. The immoderate idealization both of the Supreme Beings and of savage peoples in general which was characteristic of Andrew Lang, was an outflow of the romantic spirit which dominated him and led him naturally to assume that "the nobler set of ideas is more ancient than the lower." [1] Apart from this it would probably be unjust to say that he was led to his conclusions merely or mainly by a dogmatic interest.

The latter, however, is quite obvious in regard to Father Schmidt, as has been frequently pointed out by his many critics. [2] Starting from the purely theological dogma—explicitly or implicitly forming the foundation for his theory—of an original Divine Revelation to mankind, he maintains as a well-established “fact” of modern ethnology, that monotheism was the original form of religion, defending his thesis fanatically against the contrary opinions of “evolutionists” or others.

One of Father Schmidt's ablest critics, Professor Pettazoni of Rome, remarked appropriately that the rigid scheme of primary monotheism presented and maintained by him is a real bed of Procrustes. To its measure all supernatural entities which are capable of being described as Supreme Beings are made to conform, regardless of the great typological varieties they present. Professor Pettazoni adds that such a line of action is necessary and logical for one who starts from the dogmatic assumption that the Supreme Being of a primitive people must needs be interpreted as a monotheistic god. [3] One may wonder, however, whether too much attention has not been paid, both by Professor Pettazoni and by other historians of religion, to theories and interpretations of ethnological facts proceeding from so obviously prejudiced a mind. At any rate in this short survey of the savage Supreme Beings, I shall not dwell long upon the theory set forth by Father Schmidt. The main thing is to establish what ideas about these beings are actually held, or were formerly held, in different parts of the world, and how this particular set of ideas is related to other forms of primitive religion.

One may say that it was in Australia that the Supreme Beings were first “discovered” by Andrew Lang, or rather by his informant the missionary A. W. Howitt. Ever since, the Australian aborigines’ “high gods” have retained their central place in discussions concerning these beings. The information Howitt gives about the religion of the tribes of South-eastern Australia and especially about their mysteries, into which he was himself initiated, is no doubt of great importance. But it is evident that both Andrew Lang and many other students of primitive religion have greatly overestimated it. Its contents, owing to the extent of the ground covered, necessarily consist of contributions by correspondents, some of them untrained observers

whose statements must be treated with caution. What is still more serious is the limitless generalization of Australian ideas which we see again in this particular case. It seems to be taken as a matter of course that the Australian aborigines are of greater importance or interest from an anthropological point of view than other primitive races, or that ideas and customs possibly found among them must needs have world-wide application.

Other important works on the religion of the Australian aborigines are those of Fison, W. E. Roth, Langloh Parker, and notably Spencer and Gillen's careful monographs on the tribes of Central Australia, which were completed in 1911 by the work of the German missionary Strehlow. The comprehensive picture we get of the Australian Supreme Beings when the different traits appearing in these works are correlated and subjected to a critical analysis does not, it seems to me, correspond very closely to the monotheistic moral high god depicted by Andrew Lang and Father Schmidt. Rather is it the picture of a god more human in his general character and more consistent with primitive psychology.

The Australian Creators—beings like Mungangaua of the Kurnai, Daramulun of the Yuin, Baiame of the Kamilaroi, and Altjira of the Arunta—are personified supernatural beings who are revered as the ancestors of the black race and generally as the makers of many objects, of men and animals, of plants and natural phenomena. They are believed, moreover, to have instituted, at some time in the past, the mystery ceremonies, circumcision-dances, and other sacred rites. They do not always appear in human shape but may also assume the shape of totem animals, such as the kangaroo, the opossum rat, the giant serpent, and so forth. Some Central Australian tribes believe that these Creators, having in remote antiquity done their work, were changed into those sacred instruments called *churinga*, or into certain stones or trees. Formerly they lived on the earth, but, having finished the creation, they ascended to a land in the sky where they still remain.

In many cases the Australian “All-father” is represented as a guardian of morality, who sanctions the rules and prohibitions revealed to youths during initiation. Daramulun, “watching the youths from the sky”, is prompt, by disease and death, to punish the breach of his ordinances, moral and ritual. Generally, however, retribution follows after death; Baiame is

even said to reward the good with eternal happiness and to punish the wicked in a hell of everlasting fire. The "wicked" are persons who tell lies or kill men by striking them secretly, or who are unkind to the old and sick—generally speaking, those who break Baiame's laws.

These may be said, I believe, to be the most essential characteristics of the Australian Supreme Beings as described by Andrew Lang and Father Schmidt. That the picture is greatly exaggerated and idealized is acknowledged by all anthropologists who approach the question with a critical and unprejudiced mind. Of course there is no question of the beliefs in these beings having arisen simply as the result of missionary teaching or European influence. In certain cases, however, such an influence is quite evident, especially as regards the moral retribution after death which is said to come from Baiame, for instance. The statements of missionaries about divine beings with moral qualities of this kind, are always open to doubt and must be treated with caution.

Apart from this there are, in Howitt's own account of the Supreme Being of the South-Eastern Australians, certain details which seem to me to reveal his true human origin. "This supernatural being," Howitt writes, "by whatever name he is known, is represented as having at one time dwelt on the earth, but afterwards to have ascended to a land beyond the sky, where he still remains observing mankind. As Daramulun, he is said to be able to "go anywhere and do anything". He can be invisible; but when he makes himself visible, it is in the form of an old man of the Australian race. . . . He has existed from the beginning of things, and he still lives. But in being so he is merely in that state in which, these aborigines believe, everyone would be if not prematurely killed by evil magic. . . . All that can be said of him is that he is imagined as the ideal of those qualities which are, according to their standard, virtues worthy of being imitated. Such would be a man who is skilful in the use of weapons of offence and defence, all-powerful in magic, but generous and liberal to his people who does no injury or violence to anyone, yet treats with severity any breaches of custom and morality. Such is, according to my knowledge of the Australian tribes, their ideal of a headman, and naturally it is that of the master in the sky-country." [4]

Again, Spencer and Gillen state of the Central Australian

natives in general that “they have no idea whatever of the existence of any supreme being who is pleased if they follow a certain line of what we call moral conduct, and displeased if they do not so. They have not the vaguest idea of a personal individual other than an actual living member of the tribe who approves or disapproves of their conduct, so far as anything like what we call moral is concerned. . . . It must not, however, be imagined that the Central Australian native has nothing in the nature of a moral code. As a matter of fact he has a very strict one, and during the initiation ceremonies the youth is told that there are certain things which he must do and certain others which he must not do, but he quite understands that any punishment for the infringement of these rules of conduct will come from the older men, and not at all from any supreme being, of whom he hears nothing whatever. . . . Any such idea as that of a future life of happiness or the reverse, as a reward for meritorious or as a punishment for blameworthy conduct, is quite foreign to them. . . . We know of no tribe in which there is a belief of any kind in a supreme being who rewards or punishes the individual according to his moral behaviour, using the word moral in the native sense.” [5] These statements, coming from two ethnologists of the first rank, seem to me to carry much weight.

Similarly A. C. Haddon states, as a result of the investigations carried out by the Cambridge expedition in the islands of the Torres Strait, that the natives of this region have no idea of a Supreme Being. Their religious dogma is based as a belief in culture-heroes who have introduced ceremonies, dances, and feasts.

In view of the above statements, it seems to me hardly too daring to set forth the hypothesis that the Australian Supreme Being is simply a mythical ancestor, the headman of the clan, who, after death, was raised to the rank of a divine being and revered by the blacks as the originator of their culture in its most important aspects, in certain cases even as the creator of men, animals, plants, and so on. Having given his people its institutions and rites he retired to the sky, where he still lives. It is quite natural that this mythical ancestor should take an interest in his laws and institutions being maintained and respected and that consequently he should become, in a sense, a guardian of morality.

Professor Pettazzoni has drawn special attention to the fact that these "high gods" are conceived everywhere as celestial beings. He points out, moreover, that it is precisely in their connection with the heavens that we find the true explanation of the various "monotheistic" attributes ascribed to the Supreme Beings, their eternity, omnipotence, science, and their creative power—in such cases where they really exist. [6]

But it is precisely these attributes which have often been unduly exaggerated and idealized. In fact, even Father Schmidt has had to acknowledge that, in regard to some of these attributes, there are remarkable exceptions to be noted among some of the lower peoples. But it has often been pointed out that even those "monotheistic" characteristics which are really attributed to the Supreme Beings are only relative, and represent no more than the consequences of the place assigned to them in the world of nature. Thus Professor Pettazzoni rightly points out that although a heaven-god naturally sees much and knows much of what happens on the earth, he is by no means *omniscient*. [7]

Again, of the Supreme Being of the Andamanese, Puluga, Radcliffe-Brown remarks that he cannot be said to be omniscient; many things may happen which escape his attention. "Whenever they (the natives) do any of the things that displease Puluga they seem to believe that there is a possibility that Puluga may not discover what was been done." [8] The missionary Man himself, who was the first to acquaint us with the highest god of the Andamanese, makes the significant statement that "he (Puluga) is regarded as omniscient *while it is day*", [9] from which it clearly appears that his omniscience is affected by the natural alternation of light and darkness. Similar naturalistic limitations are attached, as Pettazzoni shows, to the "omniscience" of many other primitive Supreme Beings. As to the "all-goodness," which is also generally said to be one of the characteristics of the Supreme Beings, it is, in many cases, highly problematic; often they are stated to be indifferent to human affairs and human conduct, and in some cases, seem to be regarded as downright evil and malevolent beings. [10]

Returning to the Australian aborigines, we may examine further how far their ideas of "the headman in the sky" are connected with animism. As we know, Andrew Lang strongly objected to the theory which placed the savage "high gods"

in the category of *animistic* beings. The same view has been maintained by those historians of religion who share his view as to the "unique" character of these beings. Söderblom, for instance, emphasizes the fact that the divinities which he prefers to call Producers (*Urheber*) have nothing to do with animism. "Of spirits and souls there can be no question. Beings like Baiame are clearly distinguished from the spirits which the same tribes know and fear." [11] From this it follows, adds the author, that they cannot be ancestors in the ordinary sense of the word. On the whole, he says the Australians have neither ancestor-worship in the strict sense of the word nor any general cult of the dead. And the Supreme Beings themselves are not the objects of any cult. [12]

These conclusions of Söderblom's are not consistent with actual facts. There are many statements, for instance, showing the close connection of the Supreme Beings with the totemic ancestors and with the mysterious instruments called *churinga* or bull-roarers, which again are associated with purely animistic ideas. Thus at the initiation ceremonies of the Central Australians, Spencer and Gillen tell us that the bull-roarers resound everywhere, and that the women believe that the roaring is the sound of the great spirit Twanyirika who has come to take the boys away.

This belief, the authors say, is fundamentally the same among all Australian tribes. Among the Kurnai, for example, Howitt states that the voice of Daramulun is in the bull-roarer; whenever the bull-roarer sounds, the natives believe that they hear Daramulun himself. [13] From a primitive point of view this means that the *soul* of Daramulun is in the sacred instrument, a fact quite consistent with the use of the bull-roarer among other primitive tribes. The Bororó of Central Brazil believe, for instance, that the booming sound produced by the instrument, when it is swung round, proceeds from the spirits which it calls up. The Australians think that it is the ancestor in the sky whose voice is heard in the *churinga*. On the other hand it is significant that the sound of the *churinga* is also identified with thunder: the tribes of South-eastern Australia believe that when it thunders the ancestor in the sky is swinging his *churinga*; or, that the thunder is Daramulun's own voice. [14]

These ideas seem to show clearly that the Australian ancestor or Father in the sky belongs to the same category of supernatural beings as other souls and spirits. This also appears

from the fact that, according to Howitt, Daramulun is spoken of as living in the sky and ruling over the ghosts of the dead Kurnai. [15] It is natural that the Father in the sky should rule over the spirits of the dead in the next life just as, in his capacity of headman of the clan, he has ruled over the living on earth.

To me it seems not quite correct to assert that the Australians have no kind of ancestor-worship, and that their Supreme Beings are entirely devoid of any cult. There are, in fact, certain rites and ceremonies which refer to the heavenly gods or "All-fathers", although—and this is characteristic of the Australians—this cult is essentially of a magical nature. Mrs. Langloh Parker was told, for example, that, in the Euahlayi tribe, prayers are addressed to Byame at funerals for the souls of the dead and that at some initiatory rites the oldest medicine-man present, addresses a prayer to him asking him to give the people long life as they have kept his law. [16] Of Daramulun, Howitt says that although there is no worship of him, "the dances round the figure of clay and the invocation of his name by the medicine-men certainly might have led up to it." [17] Figures made of logs are set up on the initiation ground to represent Baiame and his wife; or the men throw blazing sticks at the women and children to symbolize Daramulun coming to burn them. [18]

But in the *churinga* ceremonies above all, we have a primitive magical rite by which these Supreme Beings are summoned in just the same way, for instance, as in South America, where ghosts and demons are invoked by the bull-roarer. We have a purely magical ceremony of the same kind in the "worship" which the Warramunga tribe pays to a mythical gigantic water-snake and totem father called Wollunqua.

Wollunqua lives in a pool and once, according to tradition, he came out and destroyed some men and women; at last he was obliged to retire under a shower of stones. To prevent him from repeating his ravages they perform ceremonies by which they propitiate and coerce him at the same time. The snake is represented in different ways. One sacred object consists of an oblong, snake-like roll of stalks wound round with human hair and adorned with white down which a man wears on his head during certain acts of the ceremonies. They also make a long mound of wet sand and draw wavy bands on it to represent the water-snake. Round this at night they sing and dance by the light of fires until early morning. Then they attack the mound

fiercely with their weapons and soon demolish it. If, shortly afterwards, they hear thunder rumbling in the distance, they declare that it is the voice of the water-snake saying that he is pleased with what they have done and that he will send rain. But if the remains of the ruined mound are left uncovered, he growls, and his growl is a peal of thunder. When they hear it they hasten to cover the ruins with branches lest the snake should come and eat them up. [19] Wollunqua occupies in the native mind the position of a dominant totem. He is evidently on the way to become a real god or even a Supreme Being, as appears from his association with thunder.

Magical rites like these and the *churinga* ceremonies which are also associated with the Supreme Beings, seem to be characteristic of the Australians, but are by no means limited to this continent. It is interesting to note that the Wollunqua ceremonies are essentially the same as certain rites described by Wallace among the Indians of North-West Brazil. At one of their great feasts the natives made two huge artificial snakes of twigs and bushes bound together with *sipó* (a creeper) and with heads formed by bundles of leaves of the tree *Cecropia*, painted bright red. They divided themselves into two parties of twelve or fifteen each and, lifting the snakes on their shoulders, began dancing. In the dance they imitated the undulations of the serpent, raising the head and twisting the tail. All the time *kashiri* (fermented manioc-beer) was being abundantly supplied. [20] The meaning of this ceremony is not obscure. Such dances, accompanied by excessive drinking of some fermented beer, are generally performed after a death in South America. Their object is to invoke or propitiate the spirit of the animal whose image or figure is brought forth in the procession or dance. The Indians believed that the soul of the dead was reincarnated in the giant snake—a common belief in tropical South America—and so they propitiated its spirit by the dance. The giant snake was not the totem of the Indians, but it was a supernatural being or demon who had to be conjured. Similarly in Australia the giant snake of the Warramunga, although a purely mythical being, was evidently looked upon as a reincarnation of one of those ancestors of the natives who had become a “ Supreme Being ”.

We know that the Australians are by no means the only primitive tribes among whom traces of “ primary monotheism ”

have been found. There are statements about similar Supreme Beings from Melanesia and Polynesia, Borneo, India, different parts of Africa, America, and so forth. Generally, in Africa, for instance, they are described as benevolent deities who created all things, who live in the sky and now seldom interfere in human affairs, who are not the objects of any cult and who as a rule are entirely indifferent to the good or bad deeds of men. In a few cases only are they described as moral beings who watch the actions of men.

In order to be able to decide how far such ideas are really genuine or how far the result of foreign influence, we must carefully scrutinize the sources from our knowledge. This naturally presents great difficulties in regard to a continent like Africa. The majority of the numerous travellers and missionaries who, in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, travelled in West Africa, for instance, were evidently convinced that the negroes really believed in one single omnipotent and all-good divine being, the creator of the world. This Supreme Being was not worshipped in any way simply because he was regarded as too good to need any worship, whereas, on the other hand, the negroes considered it necessary to propitiate the evil spirits. Even in the nineteenth century most anthropologists and historians of religion were of the opinion that the religion of the negroes was a kind of "monotheism", a view which appears, for instance, in Waitz's well-known *Anthropology*. [21] On the other hand, Bosman, who was a commercial traveller, takes a much more unprejudiced view of this question. He expresses the opinion that the negroes' belief in a Supreme Being is the result of their contact with Europeans. [22]

This opinion seems to be confirmed by the fact that the oldest chronicler of the West African negroes, the Moorish geographer Leo Africanus, who travelled in North and West Africa from 1505 to 1520, expressly states that they did not worship any being who could be called a god. [23] In any case, in dealing with such higher conceptions of religion as are found among the African negroes, we always have to take into account a possible Christian or Islamic influence, which again makes it difficult to arrive at positive results in regard to their Supreme Beings.

In general it may be said that the more attention modern ethnological research pays to the statements of these older

missionaries and travellers, the more clearly unreliable they become. Even in cases where the statements contain a kernel of truth, the beliefs of the peoples concerned are deliberately presented in such a way as to make it possible for certain scientists to defend the dogma of primary monotheism with “ ethnological ” arguments.

A significant instance of this—besides what has been said of the Australian “ high gods ”—are the statements of the missionary E. H. Man as to the Supreme Being of the Andaman islanders, Puluga. According to him this Supreme Being was never born and is immortal. He created the world and all it contains. He is regarded as omniscient while it is day, knowing even the thoughts of their hearts. He is angered by the commission of certain sins—falsehood, theft, grave assault, murder, adultery, and so on. He is the judge from whom each soul receives its sentence after death. He sends the spirits of the departed to a place comprising the whole area under the earth, to await the resurrection, etc. [24]

Man’s statements on this point, however, have been contradicted by a later resident among the Andamanese, Radcliffe-Brown. He shows that the religious ideas of these natives have been greatly exaggerated by Man. He states, for example, that the tribes he visited do not believe in one, but in *two* supreme beings, Bilika (Puluga) and Teria (Daria). Both are no more than personifications of the two main winds blowing in the islands, the first of the north-east monsoon, the second of the south-west monsoon. Bilika is the principal deity and is thought of as female, though later, among other tribes, this divinity is conceived as a man. These deities have no moral qualities. Originally Bilika was even regarded as malevolent to men. Bilika is believed to send destructive storms, whereas Teria sends rain. In spite of careful and repeated inquiries, Radcliffe-Brown could not establish the fact that Puluga punished such sins as theft, murder, and adultery. The only thing he punishes is the transgression of certain ritual prohibitions, that, for instance, against digging up yams, cutting *barala* (*Caryota sobolifera*) during the rains, or burning or melting bees-wax. Against these he takes action by sending storms or a deluge. In particular Radcliffe-Brown questions Man’s statement that Puluga is omniscient, adding that certain of the native customs are direct in contradiction to any such belief. Not only is Puluga’s omniscience

limited to the day, *i.e.* he needs light to see what happens among men; but in general: " Whenever they do any of the things that displease Puluga they seem to believe that there is a possibility that Puluga may not discover what has been done." [25]

It is, in fact, an absurd assumption that so primitive a people as the Andamanese should have reached the stage of considering such subtle abstract notions as " omniscience ", " omnipresence ", " all-goodness ", as divine qualities, notions which even dogmatic theology has arrived at only through the philosophical speculations of centuries.

It is easier, perhaps, to control and analyse such statements about Supreme Beings in reference to the New World. In this respect it is important to note that the " Great Spirit ", so often mentioned in accounts of the religion of the North American Indians, has been unable to retain the place as a moral Supreme Being assigned to him by earlier travellers and missionaries. Even among them, there seems to have been a division of opinion as to the attributes to be ascribed to him and his relation to the world and mankind.

Schoolcraft, for instance, asserts that in the oral traditions of the Indians there is no attempt " to make man accountable to him, here or hereafter, for aberrations from virtue, goodwill, truth, or any form of moral right. With benevolence and pity as prime attributes the Great Transcendental Spirit of the Indian does not take upon him a righteous administration of the world's affairs, but on the contrary, leaves it to be filled, and its affairs in reality governed, by demons and fiends in human form." [26] On the other hand, for instance, Morgan states of the Iroquois that their most essential moral precepts " were taught as the will of the Great Spirit, and obedience to their requirements as acceptable in his sight." [27] Here, as elsewhere, statements making the Supreme Being the source of moral retribution in this or the after-life, must be treated with great caution.

Further, it is important to note that, when examined more closely, the Great Spirit of the North American Indians has, in some cases, at least turned out to be not a personal and individual being at all, but simply an impersonal natural power. A fruitful source of error, as pointed out by Mr. Dorsey, has been a misunderstanding of native terms and phrases, an observation, in fact, which does not hold true only of the North American Indians. The Dacotah word *wakanda*, translated as

“Great Spirit”, means simply “mystery”, or “mysterious”, and signifies rather a quality than a definite entity. Among many tribes the sun is *wahanda*, among the same tribes the moon is *wakanda*, and so are thunder, lightning, the stars, the winds, as also various animals, trees and inanimate objects or places of a striking character; even a man, especially a medicine-man, may be considered *wakanda*. This statement is specially interesting because many parallels to it would be adduced from other parts of the world. [28]

As to the ideas of the South American Indians, I can speak from personal experience. Having studied the intellectual culture and religion of the Indians in different parts of the continent for several years, I am thoroughly convinced that, among tribes unaffected by missionary teaching and European influence, there is no belief in a moral Supreme Being of the kind assumed by the culture-history school. Among some comparatively advanced tribes there are undoubtedly ideas about an Earth-mother or about masculine Great Spirits of the vegetation who rule the trees and plants and are appealed to by their worshippers for a rich harvest. Usually they are honoured at the same time as the ancestors of the Indian race and as founders of its general culture.

Such a Supreme Being, for instance, is the great ancestral spirit of the Uítoto, Nainuema, worshipped as the creator of the world, and particularly as the father of plants and animals. Every year he reveals himself to the Indians in the growth of the vegetation. His soul resides in the individual trees and plants, and after the harvest he goes back to the under-world. Consequently the Indians are able to say that during the time that there are no fruits, these stay with the Father under the earth. The souls (*koméke*) of the fruits and plantations are identical with that of the Father. [29] Here we have a development of ideas characteristic of the higher tribes of South America: the individual plant spirits, ascribed to every tree or plant, are made subject to a god of vegetation reigning over them. Supreme Beings of this kind, for instance, are the famous “Great Spirit” of the Uaupés Indians in North-West Brazil, Yurupary, and the deity of the Indians of the Orinoco, Cachimana, associated with certain interesting mystery ceremonies. [30]

Again, the Jibaro Indians of Eastern Ecuador and Peru have their Earth-mother Nungüi and her consort Shakaema, who are

looked upon and worshipped as the founders of the whole Jibaro culture. The ideas about these Supreme Beings have the advantage of being absolutely genuine, and show us the religious state the primitive Indians may attain without being influenced from outside. [31]

Far otherwise is it, for instance, with such natives as the Indians of the Tierra del Fuego, whose "ethical monotheism" has been the object of so much discussion in recent years. On the whole, the Fuegians seem to be almost the only South American tribe in which anthropologists and historians of religion have taken any interest. This is a pity, because these very tribes (the Jahgans and the Onas) have also been influenced to such an extent by Christian ideas that such religious ideas as they now hold cannot possibly be taken as representing their original beliefs, still less as typical of the religion of the South American Indians. I have pointed out this fact before, but it deserves especial emphasis when we start to examine the lofty religious ideas recently ascribed to them by two Catholic ethnologists of the culture-history school.

The statement, upon which Andrew Lang years ago founded his theory of Fuegian monotheism, has been scrutinized in a previous chapter and found to be wholly untrustworthy. Some twelve years ago, however, the same theory was revived with special reference to the Jahgans or Yamanas by Father Koppers, who spent about four months among these natives, and later by Father Gusinde, who also studied the Onas and the Alakaluf. Both these ethnologists were unanimous in ascribing to all Fuegian tribes a "pure ethical monotheism" of much the same kind as the culture-history school claims to have found among several other savage tribes belonging to what has been termed the *Urkultur*. Much fuss has been made about these "discoveries" by the said ethnologists and by the school to which they belong. Father Koppers calls the discovery of the monotheism of the Jahgans "the most interesting and the most important sensation within the field of modern comparative science of religion"! The same extraordinary importance is ascribed by Father Gusinde to his own studies of the religion of the Ona or Selkman Indians. [32]

These excessive pretensions appear somewhat curious when we consider the very short time both Koppers and Gusinde actually spent studying the Fuegian tribes, and the radical contradiction

in which their statements stand to the accounts of other writers possessing a much more thorough knowledge of them.

In the beginning of 1922 Koppers and Gusinde, two young and inexperienced ethnologists, stayed for about *four months* among the half-civilized Jahgans, and Gusinde, during the four journeys made to the Tierra del Fuego, stayed in all for about four months among the Onas. The repeated statements of both ethnologists that both the Jahgans and the Onas belong to “ the most primitive representatives of the human race ” [33] can hardly be taken seriously by anybody who knows the civilizing work that both Catholic and Protestant missionaries have done among them for many decades. The Anglican mission was established among the Jahgans in 1858, and the Rev. T. Bridges worked among them for no less than forty years, teaching them the Christian faith and trying in every way to civilize them. Again the first Catholic mission was founded among the Onas or Selknam in 1889 and the second in 1893. Since that time the Onas have rapidly been losing both their independence and their “ savage ” character. Neither Koppers nor Gusinde, therefore, has seen the Fuegians in their natural state. What these travellers actually saw were the last remnants of a dying native race, ill-treated during centuries by the superior white race, deprived of its independence, “ civilized ” and christianized to such an extent that, in 1920, it must have been impossible to catch anything but glimpses of their original native culture.

This is confirmed by one of Koppers’ and Gusinde’s colleagues, Father A. Agostini, [34] who spent ten years in the Tierra del Fuego, and by other persons who have recently visited these regions. Among these I mention members of the 1928 Finnish geographical expedition to Tierra del Fuego, who could fully confirm the above facts. It appears, moreover, from Father Agostini’s work that the last Cloceten feast of the Onas was held in 1913—*i.e.* several years before Father Gusinde visited the Onas—and that the only Europeans who have witnessed them are the brothers Lucas and William Bridges. [35] Owing to their knowledge of the language and customs of the Indians these men also succeeded in penetrating into the secret of these ceremonies.

It is against this background that one must review the statements of Fathers Koppers and Gusinde respecting the “ ethical

monotheism " of the Fuegians. On this point one of their critics, Dr. Fahrenfort, has stamped their works as wholly worthless because of their obvious " bias " [36]; another, Professor Pettazzoni, thinks that they can be accepted as having a certain value only if we bear in mind that the beliefs ascribed to the tribes in question do not refer to the period before the introduction of Christianity, but show an amalgamation of old heathen and more recent Christian ideas. [37] While agreeing on the whole with Professor Pettazzoni, I should like to emphasize the fact that the works referred to can be used only most critically and be credited only in such matters where their statements are confirmed by those of others who have been able to make personal observations among these half-civilized Indians.

Our most trustworthy authority on the Fuegians, particularly on the Jahgans, is unquestionably the Rev. Thomas Bridges. But though he has compiled the most complete vocabulary ever noted down from an Indian tribe in South America, he unfortunately recorded little about their customs and religion, which he knew so intimately. This loss to science cannot be replaced by the more or less transient observations of modern travellers, even though they publish the results of their studies in giant volumes like Father Gusinde's last book on the Selknam. [38]

Bridges lived among the Jahgans for no less than forty years, and expressly states that they have no idea of a Supreme Being. Bridges expresses what he found to be the essence of the Jahgan religion, in the following words: " The Indians believe in ghosts, in wild men of the woods, called kanoosh; they have a tradition of the flood; they believe in the immortality of the soul. But they have no knowledge of God, no thought of a future state, either of reward or punishment. Their word for ghost is cujpik (cushpich), which is also an adjective signifying frightful, awful." [39] That this cujpik is evidently identical with what Fitzroy called the " great black man of the wood ", has been shown before. From Bridges' short summary it appears that the religion of the Fuegians is an animism very similar to that found among other South American tribes, and more particularly among the Chaco Indians, who, culturally, are closely related to the Fuegians. The statement that the Jahgans do not believe in any " God " (supreme being) was also confirmed for me by the Scotch missionary, Barbrooke Grubb, who spent three years among the Jahgans.

Father Koppers now introduces a new Supreme Being, a monotheistic god, under the name of Watauinewa, to whom the usual attributes of such beings are given: he is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, righteous, and so forth. [40] Most of these qualities, however, appear to be of a somewhat relative nature as has been shown by Professor Pettazzoni.

This may be said of his “righteousness”. On this point, in particular, the statements of Koppers and Gusinde are, in fact, clearly contradictory. On the one hand wholly impartial righteousness is ascribed to him; “arbitrary actions are unknown to him”. The Indians’ firm belief in Watauinewa’s kindness to men inspires them with such childlike confidence that they call him “Father” and address him with the same filial reverence as they would an earthly parent. On the other hand, Watauinewa is said to be the author of many evils which he apparently sends in a most arbitrary way: he may send good weather, but he is also responsible for the storms and bad weather with which the Fuegians are so often tormented. Above all he sends disease and death, not as a merited punishment, but simply because of his capricious mood. The consequence is that when a death takes place, the Indians, far from finding anything “righteous” in it, make him bitter reproaches, insult him, and call him “the murderer in the heaven”, a description by which he is, in fact, commonly known. [41]

Professor Pettazzoni has tried to show that these contradictory traits in the personality of the Supreme Being of the Jahgans can be explained from the fact that, on the one hand, Watauinewa is identical with the evil spirit, Cuspic (Cujpik) of Fitzroy and Bove, while on the other hand he has been invested in modern times with attributes ascribed to the Christian God. [42] The latter theory is perfectly consistent with the repeated declaration of the Jahgans that “Watauinewa is like God, like the Christian God.” [43] As to Cuspic, he is, of course, in origin not a “supreme being” or personal god at all, but simply an evil spirit or soul of the kind believed in by all South American Indians. His character of a personal being is of later origin like the attributes of goodness, omniscience, etc., now supposed to be given to the being called Watauinewa.

As to the word *Watauinewa*, still more may be said. It is clear that if the Jahgans had really had a belief in a Supreme God by this name, a man like Bridges would have known about him.

It is absurd to assume that such a belief could have escaped a missionary who resided for forty years among them, whereas it was revealed immediately to two inexperienced ethnologists who visited them for a few months. It is interesting to note that the word *watauinewa* (*watauinawo*) was, in fact, known to Bridges; it occurs in his great vocabulary with the meaning "the ancient one who changes not. A suitable term for God indicative of his eternity and unchangeableness." [44] Since Bridges expressly states that the Jahgans have no genuine idea of a god of the kind described by Koppers and Gusinde, it seems obvious that the word *Watauinewa* was introduced by himself "as a suitable term" for the God with whom he—like all missionaries—wished to make the Indians acquainted.

That *watauinewa* is really a suitable term for a Supreme Being appears from the fact that it means "old", "very old". There are other names of gods in South America which have the same derivation; it is a common thing for the Indians to use names meaning "very old" of the spirits of their ancestors who are the objects of a cult. The Jibaro word *arútama* (from *aruta*, old) denotes, for instance, the spirits of their dead ancestors who were great warriors and medicine-men, and who are invoked by the Indians in certain important religious ceremonies. [45] None of these *arútama*, however, has yet been developed into a Supreme Being, and the word *arútama* consequently is not a proper noun. On the other hand, this change has taken place to a certain extent with the Aittah Talak of the Mataco Indians in the Chaco, whom I also had an opportunity of studying. *Talák* in the Mataco language means "very old", and *aittah talák* is the name of the personal guardian spirit whom the medicine-man invokes when he wants to cure sick people. Originally the *aittah* of the Mataco signify simply the spirits of the dead, but to every medicine-man his own guardian spirit (*aittah talák*) appears as a sort of Supreme Being. [46] Now according to the belief of all South American Indians the medicine-men not only cure sickness but are also credited with the power of sending sickness. No tribes who have kept up their genuine ideas attribute sickness to a Supreme Being. Therefore, when Watauinewa, as described by Koppers and Gusinde, sends disease and death, this peculiarity is most naturally explained from the fact that Watauinewa "the murderer in the heaven", has been invested with the power commonly ascribed to the medicine-men, or their spirits.

This seems to me the most probable solution of the Watauinewa problem. I may add that none of the ideas of the kind referred to above can be traced among the Chaco Indians, who are closely related to the Fuegians but much more primitive. Neither do the Choroti nor the Mataco, studied by myself, nor the Lenguas studied by Mr. Grubb, possess such Supreme Beings. Among the Tobas I traced the belief in two deities, one good and one bad, but they are far from being anything like the Watauinewa or Temaukel of the Fuegians as far as I can understand. [47] An "ethical monotheism" such as that ascribed to the half-civilized natives of the Tierra del Fuego by Fathers Koppers and Gusinde, is radically at variance with the mental state and religion of those South American Indians who have in the main retained their genuine native culture.

The same may be said of the Supreme Being of the Onas, Temaukel, who likewise on essential points has been misinterpreted by Father Gusinde. In general, it may be fitting to point out the curious way in which Koppers and Gusinde confound the concepts "monotheism" and "Supreme Being," just as if an existing belief in a mythic "god in the sky" who is the object of no cult, would justify us in characterizing an essentially animistic religion with magical invocations and other primitive cult forms as "monotheistic". [48]

We may from what has been stated in the last pages, be able to form a general opinion about the belief in Supreme Beings in South America. Ideas of Creators and culture-heroes are certainly found among several tribes, just as they are among the Australian aborigines. There are many cases of tribes which have attempted to formulate a theory as to the origin of their culture. They want to find an answer to the question who has given them useful plants, implements, and weapons, who has taught them to cultivate the ground, to spin, weave, and so forth. Sometimes they even want to know how their own race has come into being. Answers to such questions are given in myths about mighty ancestors and chiefs who formerly lived among them but later, from one reason or another, retired from their people, either up to the sky, or down to the under-world where they still exist. They are never conceived as moral beings of the kind described by Andrew Lang and the Culture-History School, although, of course, the belief in such tribal culture-heroes may have a certain moral influence on the practical life of the

Indians. And the fact that, as a general rule, they are not the objects of any cult, of course greatly lessens their religious importance.

As pointed out before, Söderblom prefers to call these Supreme Beings "Producers" (*Urheber*). According to his opinion they are an expression of a need, felt even by primitive peoples, to explain the origin of men and of things, of rites and ceremonies, in short, of everything they find requires explanation. This author strongly emphasizes the impossibility of referring these Supreme Beings to any known category of supernatural entities: they are neither nature-gods nor ancestors, they have nothing whatever to do with souls or spirits. They form a category by themselves. [49] I have tried to show that this assertion does not hold true of the Australian "Producers". I feel, and am convinced, that its falsity could be demonstrated equally well elsewhere. It is expressly stated, for instance, of the culture-hero of the Uitóto Indians, called Nainuémá, that every year he reveals himself in the flowers and fruits of the plants. "The soul of the Father is in the fruits and the plants, and after the harvest he goes back to the under-world." This is surely pure animism. The same ideas are entertained by the Jibaros about their Supreme Beings, the Earth-mother Nungüí and her husband Shakaema.

In his theory of the "Producers", Söderblom has made the same mistake as most other writers on the question, that of unduly generalizing the ideas he claims to have found in a single case. He starts from the assumption that these "Producers" are of exactly the same character among all primitive peoples, and that consequently it is possible to explain them all on the same principle. This is by no means the case, however. On the contrary, it seems to me that in different parts of the world they show considerable differences, and it cannot be taken for granted that they have the same origin everywhere. Some peoples regard the Supreme Beings as Creators or Producers, others not; some think they continue to take an interest in the course of nature and in the actions of men, whereas others assume that they have retired, in a deistic way, from the world and are now leading a life of complete passivity. Among some peoples they can be said to form part of a living religion and are the objects of a real cult, whereas among others they resemble rather mythological figures, around whom popular imagination has

spun its motley tissue of legends, and whose moral character in many cases is of the most dubious nature.

Even Professor Preuss shows the same tendency to generalize when he interprets the Supreme Beings as personifications of the Order of the World and leaders of the processes of nature. [50] I suggest that those primitive peoples whose imagination has created beings of this kind have hardly been familiar with the idea of an Order of the World. At any rate, in some cases, these beings represent the very opposite of a cosmic Order. On the contrary, in some cases, they are regarded as the authors of all disharmony, of all suffering and everything that is evil in the world. This may be said, for instance, of the Supreme Beings of the Kamtchadales, if we may trust some old travellers. They have a notion about a Supreme Being, called Kutcha, but their ideas concerning him are "absurd, ridiculous, and shocking to a humanized mind". Among other things they say: if he had been wise and reasonable, he would have created the world much better—not made so many steep hills, so many small and rapid rivers, so much rain, and so many storms. In all their troubles they upbraid and blaspheme him. [51] The Toba Indians of the Gran Chaco have much the same idea of their Supreme Being whom they call Kaloaraik, "the Evil One". [52]

Even though, as we have seen, the cult of a Supreme Being is not always entirely lacking among primitive peoples, still this cult is mostly of subordinate importance. This, of course, is not, as Andrew Lang assumed, due to their standing morally so high that they "despise offerings and only care for obedience", but to the fact that as a rule they are too far off to have any influence on human affairs. Professor Preuss rightly points out that the "high gods" become the objects of cult in proportion as they enter into relation to some important object of nature. Many of them, in fact, are more or less intimately associated, not only with the heaven or the firmament in general, but particularly with heavenly bodies such as the sun and the moon, or with fire, rain, and vegetation itself. It is natural, for instance, that a Supreme God who rules over rain and vegetation should become the object of worship. But Supreme Beings of this character are evidently exceptional.

Only such supernatural beings as are believed actively to interfere in the destiny of men belong to *living* religion. Beside

the lower spirits and demons who, because of the interest they take in human affairs, are the objects of a real cult or magical conjurations, the primitive "Fathers" and Creators play on the whole only a subordinate rôle. To decree, as does the culture-history school, that only the belief in the latter, with the faint traces of worship to which it gives rise among a few peoples, constitutes "real" religion, is to take an entirely arbitrary and erroneous view of primitive religion as a whole. Still more unjustifiable is the view which sees in the Supreme Beings traces of an original "monotheism".

## RELIGIOUS CULT

### CHAPTER XI

#### THE ORIGIN OF RITUAL. MAGIC AND RELIGION

HAVING once arrived at a plausible theory of the origin of the belief in a supernatural world, an unseen world of souls, spirits, and demons, we have less difficulty in understanding how human beings came to worship these invisible powers. Taking religion as a whole, it is obvious that ritual forms the most important part of it. The varying ideas of spirits and gods formed by man in the course of evolution may be of great psychological interest, but, at this formation, the intellectual faculties of the human mind mainly have been at work, whereas it is in rites and observances that religious sentiment can be most clearly seen.

From the evidence already quoted, we may conclude that it was a purely practical interest which originally induced man to draw near and enter into relations with the spiritual powers. Having observed that his fate depended on the goodwill of mysterious spiritual beings, he naturally began to think of some means of entering into relation with them. However dimly these beings are conceived even by the savage of to-day, they are always more or less moulded in the human likeness. They are mostly invisible, it is true, and always possess a power exceeding that of an ordinary man. But, on the whole, they have the same mental and physical characteristics, a will and judgment that may be influenced by appropriate means, bodily wants and appetites, through the satisfaction of which man may appease their anger and gain their favour.

Clearly under such circumstances, primitive religious ritual must be essentially an expression of man's instinct of self-preservation, in other words, of his desire to make existence as tolerable as possible. The relation between man and the supernatural powers which he tries to influence by his invocations, prayers, and offerings is not originally an ethical relation.

Primitive peoples usually regard spirits, if not as downright bad, nevertheless as more or less evil, or at any rate harmful beings, who must be propitiated if it is not possible to constrain them.

According to an old view, already expressed by the philosophers and poets of antiquity, it was fear that originally created religion. The view is somewhat prejudiced; religion, of course, cannot have sprung from fear alone. But undoubtedly in early times this emotion was the main motive of religious worship, just as it is among the lower cultures at the present day. Theorists of comparative religion have tried in vain to confute this thesis by pointing out that reverence, gratitude, and love are just as natural feelings as their opposites and therefore must have always played their part in man's relation to supernatural powers. [1] Such an objection reveals an insufficient knowledge of primitive psychology. Wherever ethnologists have had an opportunity of studying the actual religious life of primitive peoples, without being biassed by preconceived theories, they have been able to confirm the relative truth of the fear thesis.

This does not imply, of course, that the earliest worship was merely the expression of abject terror and despair. Its objects, although generally conceived as harmful, were nevertheless not devils from whom, whatever the offerings made to them, nothing but suffering could be expected. The great truth implied in the Greek myth of Pandora, as told by Hesiod, may be referred to in this respect. Pandora, having been formed by Hephaistos, was endowed by Zeus with a mysterious box containing all sorts of evil but also, at the bottom, *hope*. The religious view of primitive man was not entirely pessimistic. Although feeling himself surrounded by innumerable evils in the shape of invisible spiritual powers, still he did not despair. There was the hope that by offerings and supplications, their wrath could be appeased and their baleful influence averted, at least for a time. And so the belief gradually developed that by such means he could secure their favour and obtain benefits from them.

That primitive worship has primarily a practical aim is seen from the fact that the lower peoples generally worship only those spirits or deities who are supposed to influence human affairs. The real reason why the Supreme Beings are not, as a rule, worshipped, is their indifference to the course of nature and the life of man. But in the case of those spirits who are believed

to interfere in human life, a distinction is made between those regarded as evil or harmful and those who are good. Among the West African negroes, the former, for instance, are the principle objects of worship. The good spirits, they say, need not be worshipped because they do no harm to mankind. [2] Much the same is stated of many other uncivilized peoples. Nevertheless, besides the attempts to appease or control evil spirits, we generally find, among somewhat higher peoples, anyhow, a species of cult, consisting of prayer and offerings, which has for its object to gain positive material benefits from spirits or real gods.

The practical religion of primitive peoples consists partly in the magical rites directed to the control of demons who cause disease and death and other evils, partly in a worship of nature-spirits or spirits of dead ancestors in which the magical element may be more or less strongly represented. Where a cult connected with "Supreme Being" is found, it falls as a rule into the category of "ancestor worship". The cult of the dead will be considered separately later. First we shall deal with other spiritual beings who, whether in origin disembodied souls or not, are at any rate conceived as supernatural beings of a more general character.

The general rule seems to be that the lower the stage a people occupies in culture, the more its dealings with the supernatural powers assume the character of magic. On the other hand, this statement does not imply—as has been contended by Sir James Frazer—that a definite distinction could be made between a primitive *purely magical stage* and a later *stage of religion* in the evolution of human thought. Even the pre-animists contend that man tried to control supernatural powers by magical means before he learnt to worship personal spiritual beings by religious rites. That this should have been the case is hardly probable. Even magic always presupposes a certain technique, however primitive, while the idea that a supernatural being may be influenced by a gift or prayer is in itself so simple that it must have been familiar even to primeval man.

From a psychological point of view, however, we may assume that there was a time in the history of man when, dealing with evil or harmful spiritual powers he did not, at any rate exclusively, resort either to magical defences or to ritual activity in the form of offerings and prayers.

As the first impulse of the animal confronted with things from which it apprehends danger is to run away or hide itself, so primitive man at first probably tried to avoid the harmful spirits as far as possible and to escape their evil influence by hiding himself from them or by threatening them. This is the attitude, in fact, certain peoples of low cultures still adopt towards the evil spirits. The Indians of South America, as I have stated before, imagine that during thunderstorms the spirits of their dead enemies are rushing through the clouds, and attacking their villages. Consequently, in the Chaco, every time a burst of thunder is heard, the Indians, seated in their huts, begin to scream loudly in order to frighten away the molesting supernatural visitors. During violent thunderstorms, the Jibaro Indians are seen brandishing their lances against the sky, springing in the air, shouting and challenging their invisible supernatural assailants with the same words as they use in defying their natural enemies: "Come on, we are ready to receive you!" [3] It is a well-known fact that primitive peoples commonly try to drive away evil spirits by shouting and generally making a noise. But one can hardly describe these spontaneous expressions of the instinct of self-preservation as a process of magical control, although, being often repeated in the same form, they may gradually develop into a sort of magical formula.

Further, one learns of some Australian aborigines that, besides believing in a host of malignant spirits, included under the general name In-gna, they also believe in a separate spirit War-roo-goora. But as in the case of the other spiritual beings, they do not seek to propitiate this demon, and, "when he vents his malignity to the utmost, they rather strive to hide themselves from his fury than to gain his goodwill. During violent thunderstorms their fear of War-roo-goora overpowers their dread of the subordinate In-gnas and they seek shelter in the haunted caves to screen themselves. There, in silent terror they prostrate themselves with their faces to the ground, waiting until the spirit, having expended his fury, shall retire without having discovered the place of their concealment." [4] Many primitive tribes try to evade the evil spirits on a critical occasion by keeping strict silence—a form of behaviour in which a primitive instinct likewise finds expression.

As to magic, it is a well-known fact that it does not dis-

appear with the development of culture. It plays an important part even in polytheistic and monotheistic religions, in which the ritual associated with demons is radically opposed to the cult proper. Every polytheistic religion tends to become more or less dualistic, and in many cases the gods are appealed to for help and protection against the evil demons.

One sees, from previous statements, that the essential difference between magic and religion is this. Religion means a relation to beings endowed with will and more or less personally conceived, where as in magic there is a relation only to supernatural mechanical powers. In religion man is trying to influence the will of supernatural beings by natural means—by offering them gifts, by flattering them, by humiliating himself, and so on; in magic he is trying to influence them by supernatural means, by using mechanical powers which they *cannot* resist. Dr. Westermarck, [5] with whom, on the whole, we may agree, formulates the difference between magic and religion in this way.

Still it must be pointed out at once that when magical powers are used with reference to supernatural beings, their purpose is not always of constraint or coercion. There are numerous rites, half magical, half religious, which have as their only object to augment, in a more or less mechanical way, the power of the gods so as to make them able to comply with the desires of man. To this class, for instance, belongs a category of sacrifices, among others, human sacrifices, overlooked by Dr. Westermarck, as we shall see later on. Even in what is generally called "worship", with prayer and sacrifice as its main forms, there may thus exist a strong magical element. Accordingly, magic and religion are associated in many ways, especially at lower stages of evolution.

Closely connected with the question of the relation between magic and religion, is that of the relation between priests and sorcerers. The general opinion is that no certain line of demarcation can be drawn between these two functionaries of primitive societies; the activity of both comprises essentially the same kinds of action. This confusion of the terms "priest" and "sorcerer" occurs, for instance, in Dr. Landtman's treatise on *Primitive Priesthood*. Both names are used indiscriminately, without a closer examination of the functions pertaining to each. [6] Where this is done, the essential difference between

priest and sorcerer will be clearly seen. The misunderstanding which has led to their being confused is in part due to the uncertain terminology prevailing in sociological literature. Seeing among savage peoples, persons professionally exercising magical or religious functions, travellers and missionaries, without examining the nature of their actions more closely, called them sometimes "sorcerers", "medicine-men", "magicians", "shamans", and so forth, sometimes again "priests".

We must take the word "priest", however, in the sense usual among highly-developed cultures: by it is understood a person who, in a higher polytheistic or monotheistic religion, acts as a mediator between the people and its god or gods, performing real religious actions, above all those of prayer and sacrifice. Into these rites there may certainly enter a magical element, but even then they can be distinguished fundamentally from the exorcism of evil spirits and other purely magical actions performed by the real sorcerer. The sorcerers or medicine-men of primitive societies are not priests, but primarily diviners, or soothsayers, and physicians, and in some cases rain-makers. Since, however, medicine in the lower cultures is largely a religious matter and the medicine-men have to deal with spirits, this has led to their being confused with those persons who in the higher cultures perform real religious ceremonies. Nowadays, it is true, there are religions where the functions of the priest and the sorcerer or shaman are more or less combined, the sorcerers, for instance, performing the sacrifices and the priests the invocations of demons. Such a state of things, however, is obviously of later origin.

A priesthood, therefore, is entirely lacking among lower peoples who have not developed any religious ritual in the proper sense of the word. Almost all of them, however, have professional sorcerers and magicians whose most important function is to cure sickness or, on the contrary to cause sickness. The American Indian tribes, for instance, are seldom, if ever, without their physicians or medicine-men. On the other hand, priests have existed among only a few of the most highly-developed peoples, among the Incas and the Araucanians in South America, for instance, and among the Mayas and the Aztecs of Central America, who had developed an elaborate system of sacrifices. But in addition these peoples had their medicine-men and sorcerers, and it is in just these societies,

where both professions have their representatives, that it is possible to establish the fundamental difference between them.

Among some Finno-Ugrian peoples one can also clearly trace the difference between the sorcerer and the priest. This has been demonstrated by Dr. Karjalainen with special reference to the Siberian Ostyaks and Vogules. He points out that their functions were originally, and are in part still, fundamentally different. The old Finnish *noida* was not a priest who performed sacrifices. It was his duty to give the community to which he belonged supernatural help, in two respects in particular: first, by finding out, through divination, the cause of illnesses and other individual troubles. It was necessary, for instance in a case of sickness, to know which spirit had sent it and what sacrifices the spirit required to be appeased, his demands then being reported to the patient or his relatives. Secondly, the sorcerer had to discover the causes of public misfortunes, of such things as famine and other public adversities. In such cases the *noida* frequently indicated not only the kind of animal to be sacrificed, but also other particulars concerning the ritual to be followed.

Dr. Karjalainen holds, on the other hand, that the Ostyak priest, called *toek-urt*, was originally anyhow a different personage, his essential function being to perform sacrifices. In olden times sacrifices seem to have been performed even by laymen. It is probable, therefore, that, among the Ostyaks and the Vogules, a priesthood entrusted with this duty did not originally exist. But although historically, the sorcerer may be older than the priest, the latter was not developed out of the former; the priest has a different origin, just as his functions are essentially different from those of the sorcerer. [7]

The same obviously holds true of other Finno-Ugrian tribes. Among the Votyaks, for instance, the sorcerer, called *tuno*, was above all a diviner or soothsayer, whose advice was sought, among other things when the appropriate sacrificial animal had to be selected. But the sacrificial act itself was not performed by him. This was the duty of the priest and his assistants. They formed a special class of functionaries, clearly distinguished originally from that of the sorcerers. This has been pointed out by several Russian ethnologists who in former times had the opportunity of studying the customs of the Votyaks. The fundamental distinction between the priest and the sorcerer

also appears from the fact that at one time it was one of the duties of the sorcerer or *tuno* to select the sacrificer and his assistants. This he was specially qualified to do owing to his power of divination. [8]

The same may be said of the Tsheremisses. Their sorcerers, who corresponded closely to the sorcerers of other Finno-Ugrian peoples and to the Siberian shamans, were called *muzhan*. They were divided into three classes, but all were primarily diviners who, in this capacity, had special knowledge of the spirits. The priest or sacrificer, *kart*, was again a different functionary. He seems originally to have been simply an old man occasionally honoured with the task of performing sacrifices and directing prayers to the gods on behalf of his people. With the *muzhan* as such he had nothing to do, though in exceptional cases it seems to have happened that the *muzhan* not only gave instructions about the sacrifices but even performed them themselves. [9] With the Lapps, on the other hand, this combination of functions was the rule. However, even there the functions of the *noida* and the priest, although combined, seem to be different in essence. When performing a sacrifice the *noida*, among other things, must wear a special dress, of which we have detailed descriptions. Before he started to perform the sacrifice he had to fast and to wash his body carefully, and so forth. [10]

Among the North Asiatic peoples the shaman, according to Stadling, has to perform, among other things, the following duties: to cure sickness by expelling the disease-demon; to reveal secret things in the present and future; to find out the will of the gods about sacrifices and the like; to decide which departed souls are to be included among the higher good spirits, and which among the lower harmful ones; to perform magical practices through their knowledge of, and their power over, the lower spirits.

At the lower stages of shamanism, on the other hand, the shaman has nothing to do with the sacrificial act itself. His co-operation is limited to the magical expulsion of evil spirits at the joint sacrifices addressed to the good spirits. At the private sacrifices the shaman frequently plays an important rôle by determining, generally by means of divination, which particular sacrifices ought to be addressed to particular divinities. [11] Among the Siberian peoples the senior family head

is the person who performs the sacrifices and says the prayers to the tutelary gods of the group. It is evident, therefore, that among the North Asiatic peoples, the origin of the priesthood is to be found in the institution of sacrifice, that of shamanism elsewhere.

There is evidence to the same effect from Africa. Of the Akamba in East Africa, for instance, we hear that the medicine-man usually decides when it is time to offer sacrifices within a certain district, since it is believed that the spirits speak through him. But he may not officiate at the sacrifice himself; this is managed by certain old men and women called *atumea*, who thus act as priests or priestesses. Only older men and women may attain this dignity. This is more or less the same system as we find among Asiatic peoples. [12]

The same is probably true of the religions of archaic cultures, although as a rule the course of evolution cannot be followed in detail. Thus the *brahman* of the Vedic period and the Persian fire priest *athravan* were no doubt real priests, although in these religions the magical element was more strongly represented than in most other polytheistic religions. There is little doubt that both among the Indians and the Persians there were also persons who engaged in magical practices of a more private kind, corresponding to the sorcerers of primitive peoples in our own days. Among the Semitic peoples, the Hebrews in early times probably had no priesthood in the proper sense of the word. The head of the family or tribe performed the sacrifices to Jahwe. He was both a political leader and a priest. Later in the Israelite period, this office passed to the king. This is an evolution which one finds also among many other peoples, among the Greeks and Germans, for instance, who also had their priestly kings. But in this connection it is important to note that the Israelites had also diviners and prophets of rather a primitive kind, called *rōeh* or *chōzeh*. These were an exact equivalent of those inspired diviners and shamans, subject to periodical ecstatic conditions, whom we find among primitive peoples of to-day. [13] As to the Greeks, we know that even in historic times they had all sorts of soothsayers and "medicine-men" (*iatromántis*, *agyrtēs*, *kathartēs*, etc.), who divined and cured illnesses by means of drugs and exorcisms. These persons, however, are to be strictly distinguished from the priests proper, who per-

formed sacrifices and recited prayers in their appointed sanctuaries. [14]

As culture developed the priests as a rule gained more and more influence, especially in connection with the growing importance of rites of sacrifice institutions, and were organized into a definite social class. In proportion as the priests increased in religious and social importance, the influence of the sorcerers declined until at last, deprived entirely of official recognition, they sank to the status of secret practitioners of illicit black magic. However, they seldom entirely disappear. The quack doctors and fortune-tellers of our own days, such as are still found in remote rural districts, may be regarded as direct descendants of the ancient sorcerer and medicine-man.

## CHAPTER XII

### COMMUNION WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD

**I**N religious ritual man enters into relation with supernatural powers, whether his object is to constrain and coerce them, as in magical rites, or to gain their goodwill by fair means. The success of these actions depends always to a great extent on the purely personal qualifications of the man or woman who performs them. Not until they have received a more or less lengthy instruction or "initiation", are sorcerers and priests fully competent to exercise their profession. Other members of the community generally try, by fasting and ascetic practices of different kinds, to put themselves temporarily in an ecstatic condition, etc., in order to enhance their inherent personal "power", or to make themselves agreeable to the gods. A whole class of magical or religious practices has arisen, as preliminaries for successfully dealing with the supernatural world.

Primitive man's dealing with the spirits is in essence a struggle against the Supernatural. The spirits are endowed with supernatural power, while the sorcerer directs his own powers, natural or acquired, to the attempt to subdue them. Even without being a professional magician every man needs a certain equipment to resist the malevolent spiritual being to whose attacks he is always more or less exposed.

The natural magical power of the human body, as we have seen before, is due to the soul or the vital power which pervades it and is seated in special parts of it. This power is generally greater in men than in women, and normally greater in old people than in younger persons and children. The latter have little physical and psychical power of resistance and therefore fall easy victims to the "arrows" of malevolent sorcerers and the attacks of evil spirits. But the older a man grows, the more impervious he becomes to supernatural influences and the better he is qualified to deal with the spirits.

The development of the natural power of the human body so that it may resist the evil spirits which threaten man with sickness and death, is the general aim of *initiation ceremonies* in the lower cultures. They are generally held, therefore, at critical periods in human life when evil spirits are particularly on the alert to do harm. When a child is born, it has to pass through ceremonies which are believed to have purifying and strengthening effects, its body or face is painted to protect it against evil influences, magical medicines are given to it. Elaborate ceremonies are performed for young women on the occasion of their first menstruation, when they are going to be married, at child-birth, etc. Youths are initiated when they attain puberty, and are then received among full-grown men, and allowed to take part in religious ceremonies and mysteries. Those who wish to make themselves sorcerers and medicine-men go through a special initiation. Initiation ceremonies differ somewhat among different peoples. Fundamentally one may say they consist of such practices as painting of the body, tattooing, flagellation, scarification, the knocking-out of teeth, and circumcision. All these customs are magical or religious in character. In most cases their object seems to be to purify the person in question from impure and harmful spirits, and to harden him permanently or enhance his power to resist evil supernatural influences.

Initiation ceremonies in the lower cultures are thus fundamentally the same everywhere and serve the same general purpose. In regard to the initiation of the medicine-man or sorcerer, however, there are certain special points to note, which arise from the fact that his profession consists on the one hand in curing sickness by removing the cause of the evil from the body, and on the other in causing sickness in others by witchcraft.

What interests us here particularly is the initiation of the medicine-man. Just as the ideas relating to witchcraft and the methods of countering it are much the same among all lower peoples throughout the world, so is there also a remarkable similarity in the ceremonies observed at the initiation of a medicine-man.

Let us examine, for instance, the way in which an Indian medicine-man in tropical South America is initiated into his profession. [1] The art of the Indian medicine-man is a double-

edged sword: it implies not only the power to cure sickness but also the power to send it by witchcraft. Neither is possible except through the co-operation of spirits. Every medicine-man has a guardian spirit of his own who assists him in all his doings. When he wants to bewitch a person he summons his guardian spirit who appears generally in the form of a material object, a small thorn of the chonta palm, which is closely associated with evil spirits, a small stone of peculiar form or colour, a sting of a venomous insect, etc., and helps him to find the "arrow". The sorcerer either shoots the "arrow" directly from his own mouth with certain magical words, or sends it through some animal believed to be associated with the spirits, for instance an animal of the feline species, a venomous snake, or a bird. With the aid of such an animal he is able to kill his unsuspecting victim at a long distance. In this way the medicine-man proceeds to do away with his private foes. Frequently, however, he operates on behalf of the whole community against its enemies. At the same time, through his intimate knowledge of the "arrow" and his power over the spirits, he is able to "extract" such an "arrow" from the bodies of those persons whom he wishes to cure.

Among the Indians it is not necessary generally to possess special innate psychical qualifications in order to become a medicine-man; no one is "born" a medicine-man or sorcerer. When a man wishes to prepare himself for this profession he addresses an old medicine-man who instructs and "initiates" him for the purpose. Part of this procedure is very peculiar. The old medicine-man blows directly from his own mouth into the mouth of the novice, a small chonta thorn together with some tobacco-juice, at the same time muttering an incantation. As he swallows the chonta thorn the novice is believed to receive the mysterious "arrow" which will in due time enable him to act as a sorcerer himself. The "poison" will spread all over his body with his blood, permeating the whole organism, and in his mouth there will always be some to be used as required.

In order to become effective in the possession of the new medicine-man, the "poison" must, however, ripen properly; this generally takes some months, sometimes even a few years. During the entire period of preparation the novice must observe strictly certain rules of conduct. His food is extremely

scanty and causes him to lose flesh past recognition. The effect of the curious magical ideas of the Indians with regard to food is to restrict him to a rather peculiar diet. Thus, among the Jibaros, he cannot eat the flesh of the domestic swine or armadillo, without incurring the danger of death. On the other hand, he is instructed to eat the meat of a nocturnal monkey, "because the medicine-man has to operate in darkness as does the night-monkey", and of the spider-monkey, "because it is very clever and quick in its movements as a medicine-man also ought to be." He eats a kind of sheat-fish because its pointed dorsal fins resemble the small spines used by the medicine-man when bewitching people. He eats wasps because of their poisonous sting and, in order to acquire a supply of "arrows", the small thorns of the chonta palm. Similarly he eats a kind of sucking-fish found adhering to stones with their mouth on stony bottoms in certain rivers: in the same way they think the medicine-man has to proceed in "sucking out" the evil from a patient's body.

If the food of the future medicine-man is scanty, he consumes freely various narcotic drinks, particularly tobacco-water and tobacco-juice, the universal medicine of the Indians, together with another drink prepared from a poisonous liana found in the Amazon region. By frequently imbibing such drinks the novice acquires a tendency to ecstatic conditions which is necessary for a medicine-man: it is only in such a condition that he can enter into communication with the spirits and master them.

Among the South American tribes, other drastic means are also resorted to for the purpose of making a sorcerer capable of exercising his profession, such as scourging, scarification, and venesection. These frequently form part of the medicine-man's initiation. Their general aim is to purify, harden, and strengthen, in a magical sense, both body and soul. [2] The idea underlying venesection, for instance, is that evil and harmful spirits will leave the organism with the flowing blood. But the general increase of the physical and psychical power of resistance, as we have seen, is not enough when a future medicine-man is in question; he must also receive into his organism that mysterious "poison" which, although it looks like material matter, is transformed at the moment of action into a supernatural being.

The novice, of course, also receives from his master verbal instruction in regard to everything connected with the medical profession, above all the formulæ of exorcism which the medicine-men have to recite on various occasions, the kind of "arrows" to be used, and so forth.

The Indian medicine-man always seems to exercise his art with the aid of a spirit into close relation with which he has entered individually. Indeed one of the principal aims of the initiation ceremonies is to help the future medicine-man acquire this individual guardian spirit. Among the comparatively primitive Chaco Indians old men, initiated in the magic art, frequently used to speak about their "good spirits", whose help they invoked whenever occasion required. [3] These guardian spirits are still more familiar in North America. In the great Algonkin tribe, for instance, they were called *manitoos*, whereas the Iroquois and the Hurons called them *okies* or *otkons*. The *manitoo* was a general Algonkin term for all the spirits of nature, and the guardian spirits of individuals were only one class of these *manitoos*. This personal guardian spirit was obtained by fasting and dreaming at puberty, the object appearing in the dream—generally in the shape of an animal—becoming the guardian spirit of the novice. Of special interest, however, were the good or bad *manitoos* of the medicine-men, with whose aid they exercised white or black magic. Closely associated with these guardian spirits were the famous "medicines" of the North American Indians from which the native doctors or sorcerers took the name "medicine-men".

The painter Catlin, who lived among the Indians about a hundred years ago and knew them well, has given an interesting account of their guardian spirits and medicine-bags. The word "medicine" applied by the whites to Indian beliefs, signifies *mystery*; "everything mysterious and unaccountable". Above all, the word was applied to those mysterious but generally insignificant things which were guarded by the medicine-men in their famous "medicine-bags". The bags were constructed of the skins of animals, of birds, or of reptiles, and ornamented and preserved in a thousand different ways. These skins were generally attached to some part of the clothing of the Indian, or carried in his hand. Often they were decorated in such a way as to be exceedingly ornamental to his

person; there were generally no drugs or medicines in them, as they were religiously closed and sealed, and seldom, if ever, opened. Catlin states that in primitive times every Indian carried some form of medicine-bag, to which he paid the greatest homage and to which he looked for safety and protection through life. "In fact, it might almost be called a species of idolatry; for it would seem in some instances as if he actually worshipped it. Feasts are often made, and dogs and horses sacrificed to a man's medicine; and days, and even weeks, of fasting and penance of various kinds are often suffered to appease his medicine, which he imagines he has in some way offended." [4]

As far as I can see, the medicine-bags of the North American Indians offer an almost exact equivalent to the fetishes of the West African negroes. In South America, too, one commonly meets with "medicines".

I think we are correct in assuming that the above description, in spite of certain differences in the details, is true, on the whole, of sorcerers and shamans among primitive peoples in general. Information ethnologists give about the sorcerers and their activities among the peoples they have studied, is in general very incomplete. In the case of the shamans of Northern Asia, however, we have full information.

The most characteristic and important feature in shamanism is the ecstasy or trance, during which the soul of the shaman leaves the body in a state of unconsciousness and journeys to the world of spirits. This ecstasy, which among primitive peoples everywhere is regarded as a sign of man's communication with the spiritual world, also plays its part in the activity of the American medicine-man, but its importance is much greater in Siberian shamanism. The essential difference seems to be this. Whereas in American shamanism it is the man himself who, in one way or another, selects for himself a guardian spirit, in Asiatic shamanism it is the god who selects the shaman. "The acquisition of a protecting spirit," says Dr. Sternberg, "is usually not the result of the wishes or efforts of the shaman himself. It is not given to man to become shaman of his own free will . . . quite the contrary, it comes to one against one's own desire, and the high gift is accepted as a heavy burden, which man takes up as the inevitable." From this point of view Dr. Sternberg thinks it possible to

speak of a "divine election in shamanism". [5] Quite suddenly, usually in early youth, the future shaman is smitten with an acute disease, followed by hysterical fits, faintings, hallucinations, etc., which sometimes torture him for weeks. After these, also quite suddenly, the spirit which has chosen him appears to him while he is in one of these fits, or else in a dream, and announces his choice and commands the man to become a shaman, at the same time offering to guide and help him. [6]

If, therefore, ecstatic phenomena are undoubtedly more prominent in Asiatic shamanism than in the shamanism of the New World, the fact must be explained chiefly from the psychological peculiarities which characterize the North Asiatic peoples. These in their turn are evidently, at least partly, due to climatic and other natural conditions. The despondency and apathy which an arctic climate necessarily breeds in man, is reflected typically in the religion of the Siberian peoples.

Closely connected with these mental characteristics, is the great nervous susceptibility and disposition to hysteria and hallucinations which often appear in shamanism. "In the study of shamanism," says another author on the religion of the North Asiatic peoples, "one frequently encounters men, and especially women, suffering from fully developed madness." Speaking of the Chuckchees, the Russian ethnologist Bogoras, mentions that on certain occasions he observed among them a "shamanizing *en masse*", that is a peculiar pathological state of mind which simultaneously seized all the persons present, reducing them to an ecstatic condition and causing them to dance savagely, to shout and yell, while sometimes imitating men, sometimes those animals in the shape of which the spirits were supposed to appear. [7] The extreme nervous sensibility which—I think with some exaggeration—has been attributed to primitive peoples in general, [8] is undoubtedly a prominent feature in the psychology of the Siberian peoples. Naturally with them, persons with a special tendency to ecstatic conditions are destined, above others, for the profession of the shaman.

Apart from this, there are many similarities between the American medicine-man and the Asiatic shaman; their way of operating is also largely the same. Both fancy, for instance, that in dreams they receive revelations from the spirits, who

give them mysterious stones or other objects which they make use of in exercising their profession. To both, the spirits frequently appear in the shape of wild animals or birds, in some cases even as inorganic objects. Both remove the disease-demon from the body by all kinds of manipulation and by sucking. The shamans, like the Indian medicine-men, practise partly white, partly black magic. However, the belief in the exercise of black magic by means of witchcraft seems generally to be more prominent among the Indians than among the Siberian peoples. A certain difference also appears in their theories respecting illness. As I have stated before, that theory of disease which ascribes it to the loss of the soul, is more common among the Siberian peoples, whereas the witchcraft theory predominates, on the whole, among the Indians.

A close examination of the psychology of the sorcerers and their methods of operation among different primitive peoples in other parts of the world, such as the African negroes, the tribes of India, the Polynesians and the Australian aborigines, would seem only to confirm the assertion that, on this point, we are dealing with a remarkable world-wide system of ideas due to the essential similarity in the working of the human mind among all the lower races. In connection with their quasi-medical practices I shall have to refer again to medicine-men or sorcerers at a later stage.

Priesthood, as we have seen, arose later in connection with the institution of religious ritual in the real sense of the word, and especially with the institution of sacrifice. Doubtless, among most peoples, the earliest priest was the family head in his capacity as officiant. [9] Where a priesthood in the proper sense of the word has been developed, its members generally have to undergo a certain initiation; only after they have passed through it are they considered capable of exercising their profession. In higher religions the instruction consists primarily in the novice having to learn by heart the sacred Scriptures, or in any case those hymns and prayers which are recited at the divine service, or the ritual to be observed while performing the sacrifices.

As we know, the power of the Indian priests or *brahmans*, depended largely on their intimate knowledge of the highly important rites of sacrifice and the words, filled with magical

power, which were recited in connection with them. The extraordinary effect of the sacrifice depended on its correct performance; to carry it out incorrectly might have fatal consequences. The training of the Vedic priest, therefore, consisted essentially in learning the sacred prayers and in the acquisition of a profound knowledge of the theory and technique of sacrifice. To be properly prepared, therefore, for the exercise of his office, the young brahman, from childhood and frequently up to his thirtieth year, had to be at school with some priest, who taught him the hymns of the *Veda*. In addition he learnt the various artifices of the liturgy. When his novitiate was over his head was shaved; he left his teacher and was allowed to function as a sacrificer. [10] The initiation of the Persian priest, *athravan*, closely resembled that of the Indian brahman. Although the Persian priests did not form an exclusive caste like the Indian brahmans, the exercise of the priestly functions was in fact confined to certain families. No outsider could have anything to do with sacrifices and purifications. Raking out the sacred fire, the brewing of the sacrificial drink *haoma*, and the recitation of hymns and prayers, constituted the essential ritual elements of the *Avesta* religion, in which the future priest had to be instructed. The priest's son began this institution at the age of seven. At fourteen he had to pass an examination, after which he became a chaplain, *herbad*, and was entitled to officiate at the altar. It was not until he was letter perfect in the *Yasna* and the *Vendidad*, the most important parts of the *Veda*, that he became a real priest, *mobed*. [11]

The Egyptians had a numerous priesthood, which was divided into different classes according to the different functions of the priests. Their duty was to serve the god according to the ritual, to arrange and lead the processions, and to perform the sacrifices. Besides this they were interpreters of omens and dreams. We have no exact knowledge of the initiation of the Egyptian priests and of their position during different periods. In early times chief priests only wore special tokens of their dignity. It was only later that the rest of the priests were distinguished from other members of the community by their dress and their shaved head.

But the priests proper were not the only ones who performed priestly functions. In the earliest times the cult of the local

god was led by the political head of the province, assisted by those immediately under him, while the highest priest was Pharaoh himself, the offspring of the sun-god. [12] We meet with the same system in all theocratic states, particularly in the East. The Babylonian priests were mediators between the gods and men in the strict sense of the word, teachers of the sciences, which were regarded as revealed religion, and guardians of the literature which was also looked upon as sacred because the Scripture itself was supposed to be of divine origin.

In contrast to the priests of Egypt and Persia, those of Babylonia formed an exclusive caste. Their status was hereditary, and they educated their successors in their own schools. They were divided into various classes according to the type of rite in which they specialized—sacrifices, rites of purification, exorcism, augury, or the interpretation of dreams. Since the exorcism of evil spirits, although probably not an indigenous feature of Babylonian religion, later anyhow played a most important part in it, some of the priests almost had the character of sorcerers or magicians enjoying official recognition. A priest had to be outwardly blameless and was not allowed to suffer from any bodily defect. Before he proceeded to perform any ritual he had to pass through careful purifications by means of washing and so on. [13] These rules concerning the priests and their activity are met with in most of the higher religions.

So far we have been dealing only with official practitioners of magic or religion. Sorcerers and priests, however, are not the only persons who enter into relation with the unseen world of spirits and gods. Every grown-up member of the society has to do so on certain occasions, and consequently must be properly prepared. At the magical rites of uncivilized peoples all men and women are usually present, women being excluded only from those which have the character of mysteries. In the higher religions the whole community appears before the gods at divine service. Every individual taking part in the sacred ceremony was expected to be outwardly and inwardly suitably prepared.

We have already seen what an important part an innate or acquired disposition for ecstasy or the susceptibility to spiritual influence in general plays in the lower religions, for instance in Asiatic shamanism, where not only the shamans but all present may be seized by the "inspiration". Among the

Indians of South America I frequently had the opportunity of witnessing ceremonial dances in which all those taking part gradually worked themselves up into a sort of ecstasy, behaving almost as if "possessed". [14] Such noisy ceremonies among savages of our own days form an exact equivalent of the wild orgies which among the ancient Greeks were associated with the cult of the wine-god Dionysus. But it is a well-known fact that phenomena of this kind are not limited to uncivilized peoples or the lower religions. Even at higher stages of religious evolution, "divine inspiration" has frequently found expression in more or less abnormal psychical conditions.

Prophecy in the lower cultures is closely connected with the above ideas. I have already pointed out that the art of foretelling future events ascribed to certain persons, when in an ecstatic state of mind, is ascribed to the temporary incarnation by a deity, or to the supposed fact that a spirit has taken possession of them and speaks through them. We have to note, however, that this divinatory power is not the exclusive privilege of the professional prophet or diviner. Other people can sometimes acquire it temporarily, generally by using artificial means of some kind.

In savage societies it is quite common for a psychological susceptibility to spiritual influence to be enhanced, for instance, by intoxicating and narcotic drinks. These call forth in the person consuming them all sorts of dreams, visions, hallucinations, or real ecstasy. I mentioned in dealing with the plant-spirits of primitive peoples, the great importance which certain intoxicants and narcotics, known under the names *kashiri*, *ayahuasca*, *huantuc*, etc., have in the religious life of the South American Indians. [15] They are not used solely by medicine-men and sorcerers, but also by other people, even by women on certain occasions. Many Indians in Central and North America have used the narcotic which is best known under its Aztec name *peyotl* and which was first mentioned by Father Sahagun in his work written about forty years after the conquest of Mexico. [16] Owing to the peculiar visions and hallucinations produced by this plant (a species of *Anhalonium*), it was looked upon as sacred by the ancient Mexican and other Indians who used it in much the same way as the South Americans do their narcotics. They thought it gave prophetic powers: those who ate its root could predict the attacks of

enemies, or their future fortune, or reveal the hiding-place of stolen goods. Sahagun makes the interesting statement that "those who eat *peyotl* take it instead of wine and the poisonous mushroom *nanacatl*."

Poisonous mushrooms, or more strictly speaking, the fly-acaric, are used in our own day by several North Asiatic peoples, such as the Ostyaks, Samoyedes, Tungus, and Koryaks. By eating it, the shamans put themselves into a state of ecstasy. As a preliminary to the performance, we are told, two to seven dried acarics are eaten. These are said to make the shaman "mad". If people that are not shamans eat the acarics they will die, a statement one can easily understand. [17] Evidently, special training on the part of the shamans is necessary for this sort of diet. Many sorcerers, however, have no need of such narcotics. Their innate disposition for ecstatic conditions makes such artificial means superfluous.

It is worth mentioning that the inebriating drink of the ancient Indians, the *soma* of the Vedic period, identical with the Persian *haoma*, was originally a sacred drink of the same kind as those still used by many uncivilized peoples. The plant from which this fermented drink was brewed is still unknown as, too, is the mode of its preparation. [18] By a curious evolution of thought, characteristic of the Indians, *soma*, which was originally a sacred drink through which it was possible to evoke the gods and particularly Indra, gradually changed its significance and finally became a personal god, Soma. Throughout antiquity one finds traces of the ancient Aryan deification of intoxicating and narcotic drinks which produced ecstasy. Such are the decoctions of thalassaegle which Pliny tells were drunk to produce delirium and visions, the drugs mentioned by Hesychius used to invoke Hecate, and last but not least the drunken orgies connected with the worship of Dionysus. [19] As to Persia, the survival of such practices is most conspicuous among the dervishes of our own day. These mystics are not only opium-eaters, like so many of their countrymen; they are also hashish-smokers, and the effect of this drug is to bring them into a state of exaltation which passes into complete hallucination.

Although, as we have seen, these methods of enhancing the magical power of the human body and its susceptibility to spiritual influence are not limited to uncivilized peoples, they

nevertheless belong essentially to a primitive stage of religious thought. In somewhat higher polytheistic religions one notices another set of practices which have for their object to augment man's personal "holiness", and to fill him with supernatural powers or a divine spirit. To these belong the various religious "exercises" comprised by the general term of *asceticism*.

Asceticism in the proper sense of the word is thus a phenomenon characteristic of the higher religions. Practices of this kind, however, also occur in primitive cultures, although the underlying ideas are somewhat different from those upon which the ascetic practices of polytheistic and monotheistic religions are based. We can distinguish between negative and positive asceticism, the former consisting in abstinence and privation of some kind, such as fasting and sexual abstinence, the latter in mortification, self-mutilation, and various forms of penance. Both are practised by savage peoples, and it is important to inquire into the different ideas which have given rise to them.

Nearly all the lower religions have formulated rules of taboo which enjoin men and women to observe fasting and sexual abstinence on certain occasions and before important undertakings. Even among primitive peoples different ideas may be associated with the custom of fasting. In very many cases it has a purely magical aim and is connected with the idea that by eating a certain kind of food, a special kind of meat, for instance, a man may acquire the particular qualities characteristic of that animal. The instances already mentioned relating to the diet of the Indian medicine-man are typical in this respect and show one the peculiar line of thought sometimes underlying primitive customs. Other instances of the same kind may be mentioned.

Among the Jibaros and Canelos Indians of Ecuador a sort of couvade prevails. This mainly consists in the father having to diet and to observe certain other rules of abstinence. He abstains, for instance, from eating the toucan, because, according to the belief of the Indians, this bird is sometimes the incarnation of a demon or the seat of the chonta thorn which the sorcerers make use of in bewitching people. If the parents, and especially the father, eat a toucan, the new-born child may be bewitched, pine away and die. The father is also forbidden to

eat hen's eggs because, if he does so, the faeces of the child will turn the same colour as the yellow of the egg, that is, the child will get diarrhoea and die. [20] Again, when the women have sown ground-nuts, which are of great importance from an alimentary point of view, they have to diet for some time afterwards, until the plant is well developed. They are not allowed to eat meat of the howling monkey or the squirrel; nor must they eat the intestines of any animal, blood, the fat of the swine, tadpoles, or fish roes, nor chew sugar-cane. These rules arise from the following ideas. The skin of the howling monkey and the squirrel is reddish-yellow, as if burnt by the sun. If the women eat the meat of these animals after having sown ground-nuts, the crop will soon go the same reddish-yellow colour, that is, it will be burnt by the sun and dry up. If the women eat the intestines of animals, the crop will soon fall into small pieces and be spoiled. The same will happen if they eat objects that flow or melt away easily and vanish like blood, the fat of the swine, and the sweet liquid contained in the sugar-cane, or foods of a very loose consistency, which dissolve easily, like tadpoles, fish roes, etc. [21]

These rules of diet, as we find, depend on purely magical ideas. In other cases, uncivilized peoples abstain from eating certain animals because, for one reason or another, they are regarded as connected with evil spirits. In this category the most important are animals or birds believed to carry the magical "arrow" of sorcerers or regarded as incarnations of an evil spirit or demon. Animals into which the spirits of the departed are believed to have transmigrated are therefore nearly always taboo as food.

The custom of fasting after a death may, in part at least, be explained this way. What primitive people fear above all in such cases is the contagion of death or the infection or pollution of which the dead body is regarded as a seat. But this infection or pollution is not, as some anthropologists seem to think, a purely magical power or substance; it always seems to be personified as an evil spirit, a personification perfectly in accord with a primitive manner of thought. Primitive man thinks that in eating at a time when evil spirits are raging in the village, he may himself come into intimate contact with the evil spirit and fall ill and die. This, at any rate, is the idea present to the Indian mind. [22] For the same reason women fast, for instance,

during menstruation and after child-birth; on these occasions they are particularly threatened by evil spirits.

There is a general motive for fasting, seen both in lower cultures and in higher religions, which needs to be mentioned. Fasting, by lessening bodily strength, makes man more disposed to abnormal physical and psychical conditions, dreams and visions, hallucinations and ecstasy. It has come, therefore, to form an important preparation for magical and religious rites and ceremonies.

Sexual abstinence is also observed by primitive peoples on many occasions. A woman, for instance, may be obliged to abstain from sexual intercourse for some time after the death of her husband; a man must abstain before he starts for a war- or hunting-expedition, when he lies in couvade, and so forth. The motives for this kind of abstinence may, of course, be different, but they are evidently founded partly on magical, partly on religious ideas. Practices of this kind form an important class of those rules of restriction known under the name of sexual taboos. Among the South American Indians the sexual abstinence of widows seems to be due in most cases to fear lest the spirit of the dead husband should harm a woman who has intercourse with another man. [23] Generally a year must elapse before she is allowed to remarry. The abstinence of a man before starting for a war- or hunting-expedition, is frequently due to the idea that he will lose something of his virile qualities and become weak like a woman if he has intercourse with one.

In somewhat higher religions it is a common rule for priests to have to fast and to abstain from sexual intercourse before performing important rites. The motives for this abstinence, of course, differ to a certain extent from those found in the lower cultures, their general aim being to enhance the purity and "holiness" of persons approaching the gods in sacred rites.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CONTROL OF SPIRITS BY MAGICAL MEANS

THERE are a great many rites and ceremonies in which the magical and religious element are so intimately intermingled, that it is scarcely possible to distinguish them strictly. Many prayers in the higher religions, for instance, may develop into something like a magical coercion of the divinity, without the suppliant, perhaps, being aware of it. Even offerings and sacrifices are thought in many cases to have the power of constraining or compelling the gods, or to augment their power. In this chapter, however, I shall consider primarily such ritual acts as may be strictly described as the coercion of spirits, and are generally considered to need the co-operation of a shaman or sorcerer.

The occasions on which such rites are held are too numerous to be dealt with in detail. I shall touch only on the most important and most typical. Among these is exorcism of disease-demons.

To make the significance of the magical rites fully intelligible, one must first say a few words about the dress and equipment of the medicine-man, which in fact is looked upon as a part of his personality. The superior spiritual power, which is one of the personal qualifications of the medicine-man, can occasionally be further enhanced by the dress and magical ornaments he puts on before he proceeds to exercise his profession. Thus the painting of the body or the face forms an important part of the outfit of the Indian medicine-man. In some cases the face, as well as the arms, legs, and breast, are painted either red with a red paint obtained from the *urucú*-plant (*Bixa orellana*), or black with charcoal. Ear-discs or tubes, sometimes of a tremendous size, are stuck into the ear-lobes, which are perforated for this purpose. Round the neck he wears a collar made of wild animals' teeth. The head, and sometimes the wrists and ankles, are decorated with the feathers of parrots and other magical birds, and sometimes a bundle of similar feathers is held in the hand. The drum or rattle gourd and the bag containing

his spells complete the equipment of the medicine-man. [1] Very similar is the equipment of the African sorcerer. Before he starts to operate, the West African "fetish priest" may dress himself in a lion's or leopard's skin. He paints his body different colours, the face generally white with white earth and the rest of the body red. White feathers and down are fastened to certain parts of the body by means of a kind of lime. In some cases the head is decorated with a plume.

The costume of the Asiatic shaman, with its many details, is also very fantastic. Among the Altai Tartars, for instance, the shaman costume consisted at one time of a long cloak of reindeer-skin which was decorated with tassels, iron figures, buttons, and other pendants. There was also a covering for the breast hung round the neck under the opening of the cloak, footwear which at times reached high enough to cover the thighs, gloves or gauntlets and a head-dress. The iron objects attached to the costume originally imitated the bones of certain animals, among which three types can be distinguished: the deer, the bear, and the bird. For the bird, the head-dress was usually made of birds' feathers, notably those of the horned owl and the eagle. The iron plates and small bells attached to the dress made a tremendous noise when shaken and great efficacy was ascribed to them. In general, the whole dress was believed to be of decisive importance for the success of the operations of the shaman. Only by dressing himself in the magical costume is the controller of the demons changed "from a man into a shaman". [2]

Taken as a whole, all these arrangements connected with the dress of the sorcerer may be said to form a clever combination of magical powers. From a primitive point of view, every detail has a reasonable meaning. Originally among all uncivilized peoples, body-painting, for instance, had a purely magical significance, as can be shown to be the case still among many backward tribes. This was obviously so, for instance, among the primitive inhabitants of Europe of the Neanderthal race. The general idea is that it gives the body strength. [3] Much the same ideas exist in regard to the teeth and claws of certain wild animals and the feathers of certain magical birds.

Although there is general agreement that the equipment of the sorcerer has a special mystic significance, there are somewhat diverse opinions as to the real significance of the peculiar costume of the Siberian shaman. Thus Dr. Holmberg-Harva thinks that

the shaman costume, in the form in which it appears among the majority of the Siberian peoples, is nothing but "an attempt at the representation of the soul of the shaman which wanders during the performance of his art in the form of some animal." [4] The Lapps did, in fact, commonly believe that the soul of the shaman (*noida*) could travel in other forms. He could fly through the air in the shape of a bird, or run along the earth in that of a reindeer. [5] We assume, of course, that, according to magical principles, the feathers of the birds and the reindeer-skins enabled him to do so. There also appears—anyhow among the Yenisey Ostyaks—the idea that the reindeer-horns which the shaman wears will enable him to butt his opponents and push them away. [6]

But there must have been other ideas also associated with the shamanic dress. First, it must have been thought that the iron plates, skins, feathers, and other objects of which the dress in general was composed, increased that mysterious magical power the shaman needs when he enters into communication with the spirits. Besides, one must remember that the different "ornaments" and iron figures—figures of lizards, swans, divers, etc.—evidently represented different assistant spirits, "spirit animals" or, as they are sometimes called in Siberia, "mother-animals", which help the shaman to perform his rites. [7] Similarly in America, the assistant spirits who help the medicine-man in his operations are frequently represented in his magical dress.

In his *magical instruments*, however, the sorcerer has the most powerful means of coercing the spirits. There are few lower peoples among whom these instruments are entirely lacking, but they may, of course, be of many different kinds: drums, rattle gourds, trumpets, flutes, bull-roarers, etc. The most common of all is probably the drum. Among the American Indians and the Siberian shamans, for instance, it is the typical instrument by which the spirits were controlled. At a higher stage of culture, these means of control generally lose their magical or religious significance and degenerate into mere musical instruments or playthings for children. But their original meaning must not be overlooked. Their very manufacture is often connected with interesting ideas. Generally they are made of a special material believed to possess mysterious power. The sacred instruments used by the secret societies of the Indians of North-west America were always made, for example, of the wood

or bark of the cedar to which mysterious power was ascribed, because in the cedar dwelt the spirit of a sorcerer. [8] For the same reason the sacred flutes used at certain mystery feasts of the Brazilian Indians had to be made of the magical *paxiuva* palm. [9] The Indians of ancient Peru used big drums made of human skin, which were said to derive great efficacy from their material. In some cases the South American medicine-men enhance the efficacy of their magical instruments by painting figures of terrible demons on them [10]—figures of the same demons which are to be controlled by their means. Much the same may be said of the ancient Lapps who painted figures on their drums with red alder juice which was supposed to possess great magical power. [11]

In rites for the cure of sickness, the task of the magician, as we have seen, is to expel the evil demon which, through the operations of a hostile wizard, has entered the patient's body. The Indian medicine-man generally begins his treatment by certain mysterious manipulations. These, as one frequently notices in regard to the superstitious customs of uncivilized peoples, may sometimes have genuinely beneficial effects. He rubs the diseased spot with his hands or with certain mysterious objects extracted from his magical bag; he then paints it with tobacco-juice, blows and spits upon it and lastly sucks out the evil. The latter, as we have seen, generally appears in the form of a material object, a thorn, a small stone, a piece of bone, etc. Special interest is attached to the use of the magical instrument, the drum or the rattle gourd, as well as to the formulæ addressed to the spirit.

The original idea underlying the use of magical instruments, was doubtless simply to drive away evil spirits through the strong or unusual sound they produced. Primitive peoples still commonly believe that by making a noise, by shooting into the air, and so on, invisible supernatural foes can be inspired with fear.

Where a real technique of magical control has been developed, however, the principle of dealing with the supernatural powers is somewhat different. Here the chief aim is to compel the demons to draw near and even to enter into the magical instrument itself; if they do so, they are entirely subdued by the sorcerer and become his obedient servants. This is the procedure, for example, of the Indian magicians. [12] Hence the sacred rattle gourd of the Guarani Indians, called *maraka*, was

changed after the conclusion of the rite into a sort of oracle which conveyed supernatural knowledge to the medicine-man. [13] This knowledge proceeded from the spirit magically imprisoned in the instrument and now the servant of the sorcerer. The same holds true of the methods of the Siberian shaman. In Siberia, the drum is essentially a means of putting the shaman into a state of ecstasy. This state is produced by the evil demon, who is compelled to enter into the drum and thence into the shaman himself, who thus becomes "possessed". [14]. At the same time it is the mastery thus acquired over the demon which makes it possible for the shaman to attain his aim, whether it is to expel the disease-demon from a patient's body or to obtain hidden knowledge by divination.

In these cases the effect of the operation is due partly to the power the sorcerer possesses in his own person, partly to the mysterious power emanating from the instrument. The roaring or booming sound produced by the bull-roarers in Australia and Brazil, or the piping sound produced by whistles, is believed, for example, to imitate the sounds of the spirits and make it easier to control them.

To this, one must add the influence of verbal invocation by the sorcerer. Sometimes most magical actions are accompanied by powerful words, of a type which is very similar among all uncivilized peoples. The speech of the sorcerer is limited to indistinct mumbling and inarticulate sounds; or the evil spirit may be told in a commanding voice to leave the patient's body. Where words are uttered they consist most commonly in an enumeration of different supernatural beings who are thought to be possible sources of the evil. This is the rule with the invocations of the Indian medicine-man in tropical South America.

Here we meet with the idea of the magical power of the word and of the name. The power of the word, of course, depends largely on the person who utters it. But, in the lower cultures, it is considered specially important to know the name of the spirit or god which is to be influenced. According to primitive belief, the name is not an arbitrary appendage to a person, but forms an inseparable part of his being. This also holds true of the names of spirits and gods. By pronouncing loudly the names of the disease-demons, the sorcerer believes he can summon and coerce them. Since disease-demons are frequently

thought to appear in the shape of certain animals—animals of the feline species, birds, reptiles, insects—the animal-demons are particularly prominent in the invocations of the Indian medicine-man. [15]. The cure must be sought where the evil has its origin. In general, according to primitive belief, to know the *origin* of a phenomenon is equal to mastering that phenomenon. Hence, for instance, the extraordinary importance which the ancient Finns attached to “words of origin” (*syn-tysanat*) in their magical spells. But we meet the same idea among uncivilized peoples all over the world.

One of the most important modes of magical control of spirits in the lower cultures is *dancing*. Civilized peoples, who know the dance only as an amusement, may find it difficult to understand that originally the dance had either a purely ceremonial significance, or was a serious act of worship. This character the dance still has as a rule among primitive peoples uninfluenced by European culture, although in general, ethnologists have hitherto paid too little attention to this particular detail of their religious life. Many savage peoples, among others most of the South American Indians, have no knowledge of profane dances at all. However, just as among many peoples, drums, masks, bull-roarers and other magical instruments have lost their original significance, so, in many cases, have dances degenerated into mere play or amusement.

In outward form, the dances of primitive peoples differ essentially from those of civilized peoples. The music, for instance, where it occurs, still generally has some other object than that of marking time; it is an instrument for the control of spirits. In many cases only men take part. The women, if allowed to be present at all, play the rôle of onlookers. To this rule, however, there are many exceptions. In fact, in America there are dances performed only by women. One might mention dances performed by young girls on attaining puberty, or those connected with agriculture, which is largely the duty of the female sex. [16]

Circular dances seem to be the most common. In others the participants are arranged in one or more rows, moving forwards and backwards. In many dances for the exorcism of spirits, no particular order is observed; everybody hops and dances as he likes, sometimes performing the most grotesque movements and accompanying them with chanting and noise. Such “savage”

dances, for instance, are performed at the scalp- and head-feasts of the Indians, and sometimes when disease-demons are exorcized.

Magical dances, as performed, for instance, among the natives of America, the negroes of Africa, and in Polynesia, have an additional object, namely, to promote fertility. Every year, the Indians of the Gran Chaco arrange great dances to "hasten" the ripening of the important algaroba fruit. [17] The South Sea islanders, among other things, try to augment the fertility of the bread-fruit tree.

Fertility in nature, according to primitive view, is bound up in a mysterious way with fertility in the human world. Both, among savage peoples, are frequently promoted by phallic dances consisting in more or less obscene mimicry. These, too, have a purely magical or religious significance. Dances, moreover, are performed to cure or prevent disease and epidemics. One of the most interesting Indian dances I witnessed was the *nahot donnaran* of the Toba Indians. This was performed every night in the month of October and had, for its object, to prevent an epidemic which appeared regularly at that time of the year. [18] Besides this, ecstatic dancing is often connected with the operations of the Indian medicine-man and the Asiatic shaman. Magical dances likewise take place at burials, when their aim is to control the death-spirit, as a preliminary to war expeditions, etc.

It has been asserted that the significance of the dance as a religious activity lies essentially in the fact that it puts the dancers into a state of ecstasy. [19] This hypothesis, however, as far as it claims to give a general explanation of the idea of primitive dance, overshoots the mark. Ecstasy certainly plays an important part in many of the religious dances of lower peoples, but it is by no means an essential feature. Most of the Indian dances, for instance, are not ecstatic, but calm and quiet. Yet they have a deep ceremonial character.

In fact, primitive dances are based on several different ideas. By dancing round a person on a critical occasion, primitive peoples believe that they can protect him against supernatural powers. Among the Chaco Indians, at a girl's first menstruation, one of the ceremonies performed in her honour consists in the older women dancing round her at a slow pace, thus driving away the evil spirits which are supposed to attack her. [20] It is also thought that evil spirits may be inspired with fear through the movements of the dance and the noise.

When it is used in order to obtain control over spirits, the dance has the same object as the magical instruments, namely, to compel the spirits to draw near. Through the rhythmical movements of the dancing, part of the energy latent in the organism, so to speak, is released into actuality. In combination with other magical powers—these proceeding from the instruments, the chanting which generally accompanies the dance, and so forth—it is thought to act irresistibly upon supernatural beings. Moreover, many dances, especially those held before a hunting- or fishing-expedition or before warfare, are essentially pantomimic representations of desired conditions. Luck in hunting and fishing and victory in war, are anticipated in the dances and will, according to magical ideas, inevitably follow. Even in these dances, one sees the principle which underlies most of the dances of savages, namely, the principle of *imitation*.

The Indians of the Gran Chaco fancy that the evil spirits are dancing when they approach the villages at night in order to visit sickness and misfortune on inhabitants. To keep them away and counteract their evil influences, the Indians themselves dance at night, performing the same sort of movements and trying, in general, to imitate their manners as faithfully as possible. [21] In some tribes, the men wear round their neck a kind of flat whistle made of wood and ornamented with incised figures. With these whistles they produce shrill sounds from time to time during the dances. These are supposed to imitate the sounds of the spirits and to have the power of frightening them away. Moreover, according to the ideas of the Indians, the demons appear with red painted faces and wearing feather ornaments on the head and other ornaments. Hence the dancing Indians decorate themselves in the same way, believing that thus will they be able to master the invisible visitors. [22]

The idea that it is possible to control and make harmless a supernatural being by imitating his external appearance and his movements, is shown particularly in the *mask-dances*. Mask-dances occur among many of the lower peoples, but seem to be especially characteristic of the Melanesians, of the negroes of West Africa, and of some Indian tribes in North and South America. They are mentioned as a peculiar feature of the religious life of the secret societies which are found in these parts of the world.

The masks are generally very grotesque and terrifying, and

usually represent the spirits of the dead. [23] Since the spirits frequently appear in the shape of animals, one can understand the common occurrence of masks representing various animal beings. The wearer identifies himself with these spirits and thus gains power over them. In reality, the masks are instruments of magic, comparable with drums, gourds, bull-roarers, etc. The principle underlying their use is the same as that underlying all imitative magic: a spirit, like a man, is controlled and mastered by being externally imitated. The essence of the demon is caught in his image, just as the soul of a human being is caught by a photograph of him or by his name.

It is appropriate to point out that the whole decorative art of uncivilized peoples is obviously closely associated with magical practices, a fact that I have shown particularly in regard to the ornamental art of the South American Indians. [24] The ornamental figures which they apply to their bodies and clothes, to their clay vessels, weapons and implements, the walls of their houses, etc., usually represent evil spirits which in this way are kept at bay. We may say that the paintings represent a permanent rite of protection. Similar facts exist in the Malay Archipelago, where native art is magical in much the same sense as in South America.

The fact that masks, as also flutes, bull-roarers, and other magical instruments, were used primarily at death-feasts, as a means of protection against dangerous disease and death-demons, explains why they were afterwards regarded as taboo to uninitiated persons, especially to women and children. It is generally believed that the latter will die if they touch the instruments or merely look at them. The dangerous taboo of the death-spirit is attached to them and acts mechanically like electricity. This is the reason why mask-dances take place as a rule at remote places or in special "club-houses" to which women and children are not admitted.

Among typical magical rites the *totem ceremonies* may be included. Two main kinds of totem ceremonies can be distinguished. To the first category belongs dancing. All participants are masked to resemble the totem animal, for instance by wearing its skin if it is a quadruped, and the aim of the dance is to influence the soul or spirit which inhabits it. To the second category belong ceremonies at which a specimen of the totem animal is solemnly killed, generally at a special epoch of the year.

A small part of its flesh is then eaten by members of the clan whose totem of animal it is. To this class belong notably the famous Australian *intichiuma*-ceremonies, mentioned earlier. It should be noted, however, that magical ceremonies of exactly the same nature exist in the New World, although the animal need not necessarily be a totem animal.

Such are, for instance, the customs observed by the Cherokee Indians after the killing of an eagle, and the ceremonies performed by the Xingu Indians with the game killed in hunting. These ceremonies are not, as explained by Robertson Smith, "cult acts" in a religious sense, but have a purely magical significance. Their object is not to establish any mysterious union with the individual, the whole community and its totem animal, conceived as a god, but to influence magically the animal, or its spirit, in one direction or another.

Mask-dances are often resorted to for this purpose. Typical in this respect are the ceremonies which the Mandans, a Dacotah tribe, performed at one time with a view to increasing and multiplying their staple food, buffalo meat and Indian corn. It was a standing rule of the Mandan village that every man must possess the skin of a buffalo's head with the horns. This he had to keep in constant readiness so that he might be able, at a moment's notice, to don it as a mask. So disguised, he would be able to turn out and dance for buffaloes in the public square, whenever the chiefs might command him to do so. Sometimes the dancers wore the entire skins of buffaloes, complete with horns, hoof, and tail. The order to dance was given whenever no buffaloes had been seen for some time and the pressure of hunger began to be felt in the village. In dancing, the men, wearing the head and horns of a buffalo, and armed with the bow or spear with which they were accustomed to slaughter the beasts, would sally out into the public square and there stamp, grunt, and bellow in imitation of buffaloes. As each grew tired he signified it by bending forward and sinking towards the ground; whereupon one of his fellows would draw his bow and hit him with a blunt arrow. The man so struck then dropped like a dead buffalo and was dragged out of the ring by the heels by the bystanders, who brandished their knives over him and went through the motions of skinning and cutting him up. All the time the drums were beating, the rattles rattling, and the spectators singing or yelling themselves hoarse; and all the time

the sentinels on the neighbouring hills were straining their eyes to catch the first sight of the herd in the distance. [25]

Every year in spring, the Mandans performed regularly another magical ceremony for buffaloes. The intention of this annual rite was not to ensure the killing, but rather the procreation of buffaloes. The actors were dressed up like buffaloes as in the other ceremony; but the scene they acted was not the slaughter of the beast but the leap of the buffalo bull on the buffalo cow. [26]

These magical ceremonies of the Mandans which were based on the principle of imitative magic and were thought to produce the effects they mimicked, are by no means confined to totemic peoples. In fact, they had no essential connection with totemism. Pantomimic dances of this kind are quite common at a low level of culture. In South America, for instance, they occur among many tribes with no totemic clan organization. On the other hand, ceremonies essentially totemic, are found, for instance, among the Tlingits. Each Tlingit clan had its badge or crest consisting of some easily recognized part of its totemic animal or bird. These crests were carved or painted on houses, canoes, paddles, household utensils, etc., while on solemn occasions such as dances, memorial feasts, and funeral ceremonies, men often appeared completely disguised in the shape of their totemic animals, were represented in dresses, masks, and so forth. The Tlingits also mimicked the totemic animal or object by their gestures. Totems like mountains and rocks were imitated. For example, a dancer who represented a mountain would imitate the clouds which rested on its side in fine weather or completely covered it in bad. [27] These rites were no doubt magical in essence. They represented the particular relationship in which the Tlingits believed themselves to stand to those animals and objects they revered as totems.

Numerous other religious rites which, aiming at the control of spirits by magical means, could be quoted from different parts of the world. Many of the superstitious practices in Australia, for instance, mentioned by Sir James Frazer in the first volume of his *The Golden Bough*, practices involving attempts to injure enemies by magical images, to control the weather, etc., assume, in fact, the operation of spirits and may therefore be classed in this category. Even in many of the cases where, according to Sir James Frazer, we have "pure" sympathetic magic, that is,

one event in nature following another by necessity, and invariably "without the intervention of any spiritual or personal agency", it seems to me highly probable that in reality, spirits or souls are thought to act in some way. In any case, a fundamental distinction between a purely magical and a religious stage in the evolution of thought of the kind involved in Sir James Frazer's well-known theory cannot be upheld practically.

In South America I myself came across many native customs which seemed to be purely magical, but nevertheless, on closer examination, appear to assume the intervention of spiritual agencies. Thus, for instance, the Chaco Indians try to "hasten" the rain by the drumming or shaking of rattle gourds, just as they believe that the ripening of the fruits can be promoted in this way. [28] It may be that by the very rhythm of the movements the beating of the drums and the shaking of the rattles are supposed to influence the weather in a purely mechanical way, but at the same time supernatural beings are worked upon. By the magical instruments and the chanting, those evil spirits which are believed by the natives to keep the rain back or prevent the fruits from ripening, are frightened away, while the good spirits which animate the useful plants are summoned or favourably influenced. [29] Such customs occur all over the world and show us how extremely difficult it is to make a definite distinction between "magic" and "religion" even in the practices of primitive peoples.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PURIFICATION CEREMONIES

**A**MONG magical rites we may further mention the purification ceremonies, which are common among the lower cultures and in some cases assume the character of real acts of worship. In order fully to understand them we must start from the conception of taboo already dealt with, and from those ideas of ritual impurity current among uncivilized peoples.

In its most characteristic forms the notion of taboo, as one has seen, is of animistic origin, although at higher stages of evolution it frequently seems to pass into the idea of an impersonal magical "power" or potency. We arrive at the materialistic conception of sin which is characteristic of barbarous peoples. The conception of "sin", however, implies that the primitive idea of physical and spiritual defilement has become associated with certain ethical ideas.

Here we have a department of thought where we can observe the gradual amalgamation of religion and morals. In fact, one of the most interesting aspects of religious evolution is that which shows how, from the idea of physical pollution and physical purification, man has arrived at the notion of spiritual and ethical impurity or sin, and the notion of ethical purification or atonement. Certain higher religions, such as Mazdeism, ancient Greek and Peruvian religion, and early Christianity, are characteristic of this evolution of ideas. In this book, which deals mainly with primitive religion, the moral aspect of purification ceremonies can only be touched on.

The ideas of ritual purity or impurity, expressed in the taboo regulations of the lower peoples, take on a religious significance owing to the fact that certain objects, conditions, and acts are intimately associated with evil or "impure" spiritual beings or demons. Typical instances have been mentioned in a previous chapter. Thus everything connected with the generative processes and sexual life is impure, especially in the woman, and so is bloodshed in general.

Hence, for instance, the dangerous impurity attaching to child-birth; evil spirits are believed to swarm round both mother and child. A murder or manslaughter does not merely defile the evil-doer, but the whole community where the deed took place. The impure person, it should be understood, is not only himself in a state of taboo, but he may defile others by touching them and expose them to the same mysterious dangers. Disease and death defile. The corpse, to which the taboo of death, *i.e.* a dangerous impure demon, is attached, is regarded as a source of infection or defilement fatal, perhaps, to those coming into contact with it. Moreover, as is the case with the murderer, such an impure person is likely to defile other members of the community to which he belongs. The defilement in such cases is purely automatic and acts independently of the intention and character of the person concerned. That food itself, and especially animal food, may be polluted and dangerous in a religious sense, we have already seen, also the fact that this pollution is due in many cases to the supernatural associations of certain animals. This being the case, ceremonial fasting may, of course, assume the form of a purification.

The fact that certain kinds of impurity are associated in the lower cultures with evil spirits explains why such impurity may be identical with *sin*, that is, with an act which brings down upon man the anger of the gods. Just as the gods are enemies of the demons, so they become enemies of the sin and sinner. Moreover, according to primitive belief, certain impure substances are the seat of a mysterious magical energy which may be dangerous even to the gods. The idea of sin, therefore, cannot be fully developed until the polytheistic stage is reached, where gods and demons stand ranged as diametrically opposed powers.

But, at this stage, sin has not yet freed itself from its primitive substratum of taboo and become an ethical notion in the proper sense of the word. It does not consist in a certain state of mind, in evil thoughts, words, or acts, but in an external material impurity which can become attached to man. When conceived in this materialistic way, sin of course can be removed by external material means. Everywhere rites of this category assume primarily a magical character. Materials are used for the purification which are supposed to have the power of expelling evil spirits. Among these are water, salt, ashes, blood, oil, wine, certain kinds

of incense, and, last but not least, fire, the strongest existing means of purification.

The most common purifier is water. Not only has it natural purifying power, but it also receives a mysterious supernatural energy through the incantations pronounced over it. As a ceremonial purifier, water, as also fire, is used by uncivilized peoples all over the world, just as such purificatory rites are known to have been practised in the ancient civilizations. [1] When savage peoples dip their new-born children in cold water, this is most probably not merely a natural hardening and washing process, but also a magical ceremony; it is the equivalent of Christian baptism.

As an instance of the way in which savages still practise "baptism" I may mention a custom of the Jibaro Indians. As soon as a death has taken place in a house, the other households are at once informed by the beats of the large signal drum. The head of each family takes a gourd with water and with it wets the crown of the head of every child in the house. This ceremony is believed to protect the child against the disease-demon, who is seeking more victims in other houses.

In higher polytheistic and monotheistic religious lustrations of this kind, by which the sins are literally "washed away", play an important part. The ancient natives of India regarded sin as a kind of contagion which could pass from a person to his descendants; and they tried to liberate themselves from it through lustrations by means of water and fire. Among the modern Hindus, no sin considered is so hideous that it cannot be washed away in the sacred waters of the Ganges. Lustrations of the same nature were common in ancient Greece, where, for instance, blood-guilt had to be atoned for by such purification ceremonies. In Hellenic ritual the blood of swine was frequently employed for cathartic purposes, a mysterious magical potency being ascribed to it. Great general purification ceremonies were arranged annually in ancient Greece. Through these the whole community, and especially the temples of the gods, were purified from the accumulated impurity of the year, which was burnt or otherwise removed. The ceremony complete, the community was again pure and could approach its gods with hope of success. [2] Magical lustrations played a very important rôle in the ancient Veda religion and in Mazdeism. Atharva-Veda, the latest part of the Veda, like the part of the

Avesta called Vendidad, are both sacred books containing prescriptions as to ceremonial purifications.

Extremely characteristic of the ideas current in barbaric culture were those purificatory rites performed by the ancient Peruvians at their great annual purification feast called *citua*. This took place in the month of September, the beginning of the rainy season, when epidemic diseases frequently occurred. Before the feast began, all strangers, all those whose ears were broken, all deformed persons, were sent two leagues out of the city. They were said to be in a state of punishment for some fault and so could not take part. Unfortunate people should not be present because their ill-luck might drive away some piece of good fortune. They brought the figures of their *huacas* from all parts of the land and placed them in the temples at Cuzco. When everything was ready, the Inca arrived with the nobles and most of the people and passed to Curicancha (the temple of the Sun). Here they stayed waiting till the new moon rose. When the people saw the new moon, they all went to the market-place at Cuzco, pleading loudly that all diseases, disasters, misfortunes, and dangers might leave the country. When the shouts began at Cuzco, all the people, rich and poor, came to the doors of their houses crying out, shaking their mantles and shouting: "Let the evils be gone. How greatly desired has this festival been to us. O Creator of all things, permit us to reach another year that we may see another feast like this." And they proceeded to shout until they reached certain sacred rivers. Every clan marched in a different direction, shouting loudly in order to drive the evil into the river situated in that direction. All danced, even the Inca himself. In the morning they went out to the rivers and fountains and bathed, saying that in this way their maladies would leave them. The rivers selected for this purpose were those which flowed rapidly to the sea, and were accordingly well suited for carrying away disease.

When the people had finished bathing they took great torches of straw, bound round with cords. These they lighted and passed from one to another, striking one another and saying: "May all evils go away." They then went to their houses, where a kind of paste made of mashed maize had been prepared. This paste they rubbed on their faces, also anointing the door-steps with it. [3]

These are the essential features of the feast *citua* as it is

described by ancient Spanish chroniclers. The feast has many details in common with similar purification ceremonies among other half-civilized peoples. Their meaning is clear without need of further explanation.

We meet primarily the idea that disease, misfortune, and evil of any kind are caused by evil spirits which at certain critical times appear in greater numbers and cause more harm than at others; there was also the belief that these invisible tormentors may be expelled from a village or country by physical means, much in the same way as a swarm of flies is driven away from a room. We gather further that—as is often the case in the lower cultures—spiritual evils were conceived by the ancient Peruvians in a half-materialistic way, in other words as a kind of physical pollution which could be washed away in water or removed by some other means.

Moreover, the idea of material and spiritual pollution is associated at a certain stage of religious evolution with ideas of moral transgression. The Inca ritual just described is of special interest as illustrating, not only the materialistic conception of sin, but also the union of religion and ethics in its elementary form. Attention may be called to the detail that, before the feast began, all strangers, all “whose ears were broken, and all deformed persons”, were expelled from the city “because they were said to be in that state as a punishment for some fault”. According to a primitive idea, which in South America anyhow is quite common, sickness and deformity of any kind in new-born children is the result of supernatural influence. Persons suffering from any congenital disease are consequently regarded as “marked” by evil spirits. In the more advanced religious dogma of the Incas this idea had developed into the belief that such an unlucky state was not purely accidental, but was due to the transgression of certain moral precepts. But the way in which, among the ancient Peruvians, old savage taboos were transformed into ethical rules of religious sanction, can be studied with more detail in an Inca institution of singular interest, the rite of confession, with which I shall deal later. First something may be said about certain other purificatory ceremonies which are quite primitive in nature.

Lustrations by means of fire are common in primitive cultures. In my chapter on taboo I have referred to these rites, as practised, for instance, at funerals. Since they are almost universal

among the more primitive peoples I shall not mention further instances here. I may add, however, that such fire ceremonies occur as survivals in many European countries to this very day, although, as generally happens, the ideas originally underlying them have been lost. Those great fires which are kindled, for instance, at midsummer, at Christmas, and at Easter, are no doubt derived from old lustration rites through which evil spiritual beings, hovering about in the air, were driven off or destroyed. Likewise games, in which the participants have to jump over fires or burning logs, or rites in which cattle are driven over dying embers, are best explained as survivals of old lustrations to which the practices of primitive peoples offer numerous and close parallels. [4]

Although in the lower cultures new-born children are generally purified with water, there are also instances where fire is used for the same purpose. In this way, we may remember, it was used by the ancient Greeks who purified a new-born child by carrying it in solemn procession round the fire, or that of the Israelites, sanctioned by Jahwe, according to which everything first-born was passed through fire.

The idea that sin consists in a sort of material impurity which can be removed through external rites, was also familiar to early Christianity. In the oldest Christian literature we frequently meet with statements referring to the spiritual and material defilement which man brings down upon himself by holding communion with impure spirits, and of the "purifications" through which he can free himself from them.

Magical ideas of this kind appear in the mystery ceremonies by which a heathen was initiated as a member of the Christian Church. The sacrament of baptism consisted simply in a series of formulæ of exorcism which did not differ essentially from those practised in the heathen mysteries. In order that a heathen should be able to enter at baptism into a new union with Christ, the old union with the devils, for all heathen gods were regarded as devils by the Christians, had to be broken. In the sacrament of baptism, therefore, one could distinguish between a negative side, "the renunciation of the Devil and all his works," as well as the exorcism performed by the priest, and a more positive aspect, the act of baptism itself. The most important effects were attributed to the ceremony with the water, which was regarded as indispensable.

The great importance attached by the Early Christian Church to baptism as a means of definitely breaking the power of the devil and of the evil demons, appears clearly from many statements of early Christian Fathers such as Cyprian and Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Irenaeus. Cyprian, who in one of his epistles specially deals with this question, admits that, in some cases, the devil is able to defy even the exorcisms of the priest, although these have divine power.

"When, however," he adds, "they come to the water of salvation and to the sanctification of baptism, we ought to know and to trust that there the devil is beaten down and the man, dedicated to God, set free by divine mercy. For as scorpions and serpents, which prevail on dry ground, when cast into the water, cannot prevail nor retain their venom, so also the wicked spirits, which are called scorpions and serpents, are trodden under foot by us, by the power given by the Lord, and cannot remain any longer in the body of a man in whom, baptized and sanctified, the holy spirit is beginning to dwell." [5]

As soon as the baptism of infants became customary in the Church, it was associated with the same magical acts as that of adults. Both on account of the original sin attached to it and because of those impure and sinful acts through which it had come into being, the new-born child was naturally in the power of the evil demons. Therefore, to be saved from eternal death it had to be purified, as soon as possible, from the pollution attaching to it, and this was effected through baptism. The view that a child who died without having received the gift of grace implied by baptism was eternally damned, was commonly held during the first centuries of the Christian era and frequently finds expression in the writings of the Christian Fathers, notably in those of Augustine. [6] This view still survives in the institution called private baptism, just as the ceremony of the churhing of women was originally a cathartic rite that purged away the dangerous pollution of child-birth.

Besides direct purifications by means of water, fire, and so forth, many peoples practise a sort of transference of sins by means of purificatory sacrifices. The sacrifice, consisting of an animal, living or slaughtered, is carried about the place polluted by an impure act, such as a murder, and then brought in contact with those persons who are to be purified, after which, while magical formulæ are pronounced, it is thrown over the

boundary, buried, or made to disappear in some other way. Religious acts of this kind are familiar to us from ancient Greek ritual. They also seem to have occurred among the Egyptians. The latter, according to Herodotus, used to sever the head of the animal with the prayer that it might bear the evils of the community. They thereupon threw it into the river so that the stream might carry away these evils, or else sold it to the Hellenes wherever there happened to be a Hellenic market. [7] The evil was thus safely removed from their own community. Of the Greeks, Pausanias mentions a similar purification ceremony which he witnessed at Methana in Troezen, and which had for its object to avert the influence of a harmful wind, called "lips", which rushed down from the Saronic gulf and dried up the tender shoots of the vine. When the squall was at its height two men took a white cock, tore it in two, and ran round the vines in opposite directions, each carrying one half of the cock. When they came back to their starting-point, they buried the cock. [8]

When this type of "sacrifice" consists of a living animal, it has the character of what has been called a "scapegoat". The ideas connected with these scapegoats can be clearly seen in a custom of the Israelites. This was one of the many ceremonies observed on the "day of atonement", described in the Book of Leviticus.

After certain preliminaries, which aimed at "atoning" the sanctuary, *i.e.* to purify it by sprinkling it with the blood of certain animals, a living goat was brought forth. The high priest "confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel . . . putting them on the head of the goat"; after this, since the animal was highly "sin-infected", both Aaron and the man who led it away into the wilderness, had to wash and change their clothes. [9] This very primitive ceremony has its equivalent in many similar rites among barbarous tribes at the present day. On this point I need only refer to the instances mentioned by Sir James Frazer in his work *The Scapegoat*.

Sometimes a human being may serve as a scapegoat and fulfil exactly the same function as the animal. He may be put to death, or driven over the border, thus carrying away the sins of the tribe. Such a human scapegoat was the "purifying man" (*kathárma*) in the Attic festival of the Thargelia, who was led through the streets, whipped with rods, and at one time burnt. [10] Another example is the slave at Marseilles, who

was fattened and reverentially treated for a year, and then led forth in solemn procession through the streets and expelled from the city, with prayers that on him might fall all the evils of the community. [11]

These rites are merely instances of a magical transference of sin, originally independent of the higher gods and essentially non-ethical in character. Even the Israelites' rite of atonement was considered effective because of the sacred act itself, without the necessity of any particular change of heart or repentance on the part of the community to be purified. The goat, laden with the sins of the people and driven into the desert, expiated the sins of every Israelite who did not frustrate the beneficial effects of the rite of atonement by intentionally violating the prescriptions of his religion.

Even, however, in such magical practices as those referred to above, one can trace the rudiments of an ethical view. In the first place it is the impurity itself which arouses the anger of the gods, since, owing to its harmful magical potency, it may become dangerous to them. Gradually, however, a change takes place as the result of the growing conception of the impurity as a sin, not merely in a ritual, but also in an ethical sense. In many cases we can trace the transition from one view to the other. A murder or manslaughter, for instance, is not a crime merely in a social and ethical sense, but implies also a magical pollution, a primitive taboo.

In certain higher religions such as Mazdeism, one finds the two views directly connected. This religion, as we know, conceived everything evil, as sent by Ahriman, material or moral. Consequently it could be expelled by means of purifications and rites of atonement. Murderers, adulterers, liars, thieves, were looked upon as being in the service of the evil demons. [12] We find the same in regard to ancient Peruvian religion, especially in connection with the peculiar kind of confession which existed in the Inca empire.

Without doubt confession must be regarded as a form of purification. The "speaking out" of sin amounts to a real purgation and deliverance, especially at those stages in the evolution of thought where words are viewed as things and as controlling things. This is what confession meant in the preliminary ritual of the Samothracian mysteries, as also in the Mexican religion, where, according to Father Sahagun, it was

associated with purification and the idea of rebirth. An interesting formula of confession is found among the Babylonian liturgical tablets. The penitent prays to the god and the goddess: "Let the seven winds carry away my sighs . . . let the bird bear my wickedness to the heavens: let the fish carry off my misery, let the river sweep it away. Let the beast of the field take it from me. Let the waters of the river wash me clean." [13] This confession is half a prayer, half a purification, and conspicuous in it is the magical potency ascribed to the spoken word.

The most interesting example of confession in barbaric religion, however, is the one which was in vogue among certain half-civilized peoples in South America. At one time, a primitive kind of confession was practised as a means of curing sickness. Even to-day this custom is known among a few Chibcha tribes in Colombia.

A confession of this nature is mentioned by the Swedish traveller Bolinder, in reference to the half-civilized Ijca Indians. They think that disease may be cured not only by the usual magical manipulations, but also the confession of sins. The sickness has been sent by the spirits, and the task of the medicine-man is to find out why they are displeased with the sufferer. A mysterious object, made of the leaves surrounding a maize-cob, and certain cotton-threads of different colours, serve as the material vehicle for the expulsion of the sickness. The medicine-man (*mama*) exhorts the patient to think of a possible wrong, and confess it. While the latter is sitting and thinking, the *mama* is handling his divining bag. He strikes it on the ground. From the clang of the small stones in it he draws conclusions as to whether or not the sufferer has confessed everything. If the confession is supposed to be complete, there follows the usual expulsion of the sickness by means of the magical objects mentioned. The patient himself, moreover, has to do a certain penance. [14]

Specially interesting in this type of case is the fact that, although the savage idea of sickness and its magical treatment is conspicuous, the conception of the evil which caused the sickness is associated with a certain ethical element. This ethical feature in primitive confession, practised as a means of curing sickness, is also pointed out by Dr. Bolinder in regard to the medical art of the Ijca. When a misfortune of some kind happens

to him the sufferer is thought in one way or another to have incurred the righteous anger of the spirits. [15] As long as this moral cause remains hidden, its effects will continue, and the patient cannot recover. But as soon as it is brought out to the light of day, the effects are neutralized, rendered powerless, especially since confession of a sin may also include repentance, that is a wish that the wrong action were undone, and a resolution not to repeat it.

Confession in sickness is therefore probably conceived as having spiritual as well as purely physical effects. If a moral purge of this kind produces the same favourable effects as a purification by means of which a miasma or pollution is washed off, one can understand how, through an easy association of ideas, the notions of the material and the spiritual become fused in the conception of "sin".

In the Inca Empire, it was a common thing for individuals afflicted by disease and misfortune to have recourse to confession, believing that thereby they would be rid of their troubles. But in addition to this private confession, there was another and more important type of confession which aimed, not at the welfare of the individual, but at the welfare of the community or state; in fact, it was a social *duty* incumbent on any body who had transgressed certain divine or human laws. When the inhabitants were threatened by famine through a prolonged drought, or by an epidemic or some other public calamity, it was believed that the gods were angry because of some sin or crime committed in the community. When the person suspected to have "sin" (*hucha*) was found, he had to confess before the *ichuris* (priests). The confession took place close to a river, whither went the priest and penitent, the former carrying a bundle of esparto grass and certain other magical things. The penitent then had to confess all his sins, whereupon the confessor threw the bundle into the river, cursing the sins and praying to the gods that they would take them down into the abyss and hide them there for ever. Lastly the penitent bathed in the river, and was thus finally purified from his sins. The sins which the Peruvians had to confess were chiefly the following: omission to revere the Sun, the Moon, and the huacas; omission to celebrate the feasts of the *raymis*, which were those of each month of the year; calumnia of the Inca and disobedience to his orders; murder, whether violently or secretly,

that is, by means of sorcery, and theft, even of things of small value; assaults and plunders on the road, adultery or fornication, since the law of the Inca forbids the touching of a strange woman or the seduction of a virgin; plots against the Inca or murmurs, especially when they were directed against the ruler and his law. [16]

As we find, the sins to be confessed in ancient Peru were partly offences of a religious nature, partly crimes against life and property. This being so, it is easy to understand that confession, in the Inca Empire, had a great social and moral importance. But at the same time it had the character of a primitive purification ceremony. The question how the sins of an individual person could be believed to cause drought, frost, and other public misfortune and how in their conceptions of "sin" and "purification", in general, the Peruvians were able to rise from a purely material to a spiritual and moral plane, remains one of the interesting but difficult problems of the history of religion.

As I have tried to show elsewhere, [17] the explanation must be sought essentially in the dualistic character of ancient Peruvian religion, which in some respects recalls that of the Avesta. Two powers were opposed, on the one hand the unseen world of the evil spirits, on the other, the world of the higher gods: Viracocha, the Sun, Thunder and Lightning, the Moon and the other huacas. The former, the demons, as is the case with other barbarous peoples, were looked upon as the cause of disease and epidemics, drought, hail, and frost, eclipses of the sun and the moon, and of other misfortunes which befell the individual or the whole community. The gods again not only sustained the Inca state in a physical sense; they also represented a moral order of the world of which the incarnation was the Inca ruler.

This moral order found a concrete expression in certain positive and negative precepts, to keep from impure things, to revere the gods, to respect life and property, and so forth. Whoever violated these precepts committed an "impure" action, an action which was likely to set the evil spirits in action and diminish, in a higher or lesser degree, the power of the gods and the power of the Inca ruler, who to the mind of the Peruvians were closely associated.

It is remarkable that moral evils should be looked upon in the same light as physical evils, both being associated with impure

demons. A person who committed an immoral deed was regarded, therefore, as standing in alliance with evil spirits. Any person violating the moral order instituted by the Inca professed his adherence to the supernatural enemies of that order. The results of such a violation would necessarily be shown in events marking the triumph of the demons, and would therefore be primarily of a physical nature, consisting of epidemics, drought, famine, etc. This is the reason why the sins of an individual were regarded as touching the whole community. But since every crime implied an alliance with the evil spirits, one can easily also understand why all rites by which the effects of an immoral deed were neutralized assumed externally the character of ordinary purification ceremonies.

In following the evolution of thought up to the point where the "purification" which confession implies becomes a purification in a spiritual and moral sense, we have passed the limits of primitive religion. The further development of this institution, in the Early Christian Church, for example, concerns us here still less.

## CHAPTER XV

### SACRIFICE

SACRIFICE as a means of influencing supernatural powers is almost unknown to very backward tribes, whereas in the highest religions it has disappeared as representing too naïve and materialistic an idea of the god. On the other hand, in many polytheistic religions, it occupies so central a place that we may regard it as the most important of all rites. Not until the fully-developed institution of sacrifice is reached can we speak of a *religion* in the proper sense of the word, that is of an organized priesthood and congregation, or of real sanctuaries or temples intended for the cult.

Sacrifices, however, may be of many different kinds, or rather degrees, a fact which makes it almost impossible to set forth a single theory of its nature. I merely call attention to the differences in the ideas of sacrifice according as it does or does not include a magical element. But as we shall see, even magical sacrifices may be of different kinds.

Sacrifice is therefore by no means as simple and easily explained a religious custom as has often been alleged. The attempt to find a single comprehensive explanation of this rite, despite the different forms it takes, is the most important source of misunderstanding of the religious phenomena connected with it, especially when these "theories" have been advanced by the adherents of rival anthropological "schools".

This may be said even of such primitive sacrificial practices as offerings at graves. Whenever archæologists have found in old graves objects which seemed to serve no practical purpose, they have explained them as "offerings" laid down with the dead to be used by them in the after-life in the same way as on earth. In many cases this may be the explanation, but the fact has been overlooked that even "grave-offerings" may be of different kinds. There is an important category of objects laid down in graves which are not offerings at all. They are simply magical amulets intended to protect the corpse against the evil spirits

who cause decomposition. The very fate of the soul after death, as we have seen, depends largely on the conservation of the body.

Despite this diversity, one can make a general distinction between the bloodless offerings consisting of material objects or food, and blood sacrifices, consisting of slaughtered animals or men. The custom of offering small gifts to supernatural beings from time to time in order to propitiate them, is familiar even to very primitive peoples, although comparatively rare. The real institution of sacrifice, involving the regular offering of slaughtered animals or men to gods, occurs only among peoples at a higher level of culture. Such an institution assumes, among other things, that cattle breeding is highly developed, and forms the main livelihood of the people in question. Within both categories magical ideas may play a more or less important part.

The earliest and most simple form of sacrifice is no doubt that which has the character of a *gift* to the deity. Primitive peoples believe that they can acquire the favour of the spirits or gods by gratifying their appetites or their desire for property. The anthropomorphic conception of the beings worshipped is natural since the spirits and gods of the lower races seem in most cases to be merely apotheosized men, or souls of the departed. These offerings are only one aspect of a religion whose original object in all cases was to propitiate or avert evil spirits. Such offerings, intended to avert evil spirits, are still quite common among savage tribes which, like the South American Indians, for instance, have not yet reached the stage where sacrifice is a recognized institution. Father Gumilla relates of the Indians of the Orinoco that at their marriage feasts, in which they thought evil spirits might interfere, they are in the habit of throwing a plate of food out in the forest, calling out in a loud voice: "Take this food, thou dog of a demon, and do not come and spoil our feast." On asking the Indians why they performed this and other ceremonies at the feast, the priest received the answer: "It is because we fear the demon." [1] Here is a typical ceremony of riddance with the external character of a sacrifice. Many parallels could be mentioned. Among the Toba Indians in the Gran Chaco, for example, it is customary for the medicine-man, when curing a patient, to try and bribe the disease-demon by offering him tobacco. It is said to be a propitiatory gift to the demon. The real idea is that the narcotic plant

will stupefy the spirit and compel him to leave the patient. In other words, it is an offering wholly magical in character. [2]

Among the Quichua and Aymara Indians of the mountain regions of Peru and Bolivia, who, although now half-civilized and nominally Christians, are extremely superstitious, such magical offerings are very common. According to early Spanish chroniclers, the ancient Peruvians used to throw chewed coca, plumes of various colours, rags, and similar useless things into dangerous abysses at certain sacred places. These offerings also were merely rites to keep off the evil spirits, which haunted these places. [3]

In our own day the Quichua or Aymara Indian, when he has to pass a steep hill, a precipice, a rapid torrent, or some other dangerous place in the mountains, never fails to throw down quids of coca to the spirits residing there, in order to secure a safe passage. Similar coca-offerings are made to the demons haunting mysterious caves, and quids of coca, thrown by superstitious Indians, are often found attached to the walls. [4] The coca is a poisonous narcotic plant and so among the Indians is a typical magical sacrifice. Sacrifices of this kind, for instance, are familiar from ancient Greek ritual; they were directed to the dangerous spirits of the under-world, and had an apotropaic (averting) character. The same may possibly be said of the honey-cakes and mead which were offered to the dead. [5] Of such a character, among many uncivilized peoples, are the objects deposited in the graves along with the dead body or thrown into them by occasional visitors. [6]

In other cases magical offerings have a more positive aim, namely, to transfer power directly to a natural object or to the spirit living there, or, at higher polytheistic stages, to the gods themselves. When the Aymara Indians build a house they perform a kind of sacrifice called *tincat*. Under each corner of the house is placed a small bundle, containing the foetus of a llama, the foetus of a pig, a piece of llama's tallow, the leaves of a certain plant brought from another part of the country, and coca leaves. The bundles have to be prepared the night before the house is constructed, and only by men; they are then buried together with strong Indian pepper, sugar, and salt. [7] This sacrifice is believed to give stability to the new house, and, in view of the magical nature of its components, its virtue obviously lies in the mysterious power it contains. The Lapps used to

anoint the logs which supported their primitive dwellings and their doors with bear's blood. According to their belief, this contained much power. [8] The Siberian shamans used to smear their shaman costumes and drums with the blood of slaughtered animals [9]—believing, no doubt, that this would enhance their magical efficacy.

Many such instances could be mentioned, but the more interesting cases are those where such magical offerings are directed to higher divinities or gods. It may be pointed out at once, that the so-called *votive offerings* in polytheistic religions are often magical in character. They consist in all manner of objects hung up in temples or sacred groves as gifts to the gods, or, more strictly speaking, as payment for services which they have done to the giver, or are expected to do in the future. In time of need, or when success in an important undertaking is desired, the worshipper promises to give his god presents. Later, when the gods have complied with the worshipper's requests, these promises are redeemed. These votive offerings played an important part, for instance, in Greek religion, [10] and in many cases consisted in things believed to exert a magical influence on the god—a fact which, of course, did not prevent their being offered to him as real gifts.

On the whole, sacrifice, like religious ritual in general, among the lower races is based mainly on self-interested considerations. Sacrifice has the character of a barter, that is, of an exchange of presents. When visiting a savage tribe, a traveller who receives presents, ought to know that they always involve the giving of something in return. The same rule is considered to be valid with supernatural powers. Every offering of gifts or of blood sacrifices takes place on the tacit assumption that in return, the spirits or gods have no alternative but to grant the worshipper his desires, such as luck and success in all his undertakings, and victory over enemies; at least it is expected that they will withhold their wrath. This view explains the moral indignation with which the Lapp smashed his *seita* or the West African fetish priest his fetish when, despite all sacrifices and promises, the desired result was not forthcoming.

I shall now deal with sacrifice in the proper sense of the word, that which consists above all in the offering of slaughtered animals, sometimes even of human victims. On a superficial view we may be surprised at the unequal distribution of blood

sacrifices in primitive and barbarous cultures. They are entirely unknown, for instance, to most of those North and South American Indians who have preserved their original culture, whereas they were equally particularly prominent among the civilized peoples in the West, the Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru. Similarly the institution of sacrifice was a characteristic of the religious life of the Finno-Ugrian peoples, and occupied a central place in the religion of certain Indo-European peoples, especially in the Vedic and the Greek religion. This unequal occurrence of sacrifice, however, has a natural explanation. Animal sacrifice was developed out of animal slaughter, and, in the New World for instance, domestic animals were unknown to the primitive tribes east of the great culture areas, except where they were introduced by the Europeans. It is interesting to note that even among those tribes who have been only recently introduced to the domestic animals of the Europeans, and therefore have not yet developed any system of sacrifice, the slaughter of animals always assumes a more or less ceremonial character, as does also the consuming of the meat. On the whole, among primitive peoples the meal itself, eating and drinking, is generally more or less of a "ceremony", while among more advanced peoples it becomes a sacrificial "meal".

Closely connected with this view are the offerings of *first-fruits*. The lower races attribute to the favour of the gods, or to a particular god, all good fortune such as success in agriculture and cattle breeding, and even wealth of progeny. The idea arises easily, therefore, that the gods have a definite right to a part at any rate of the good things they bestow upon man. Just as it is considered necessary to offer to the gods the first-fruits of the fields, or, as among the Israelites, even the first-born son, so at the slaughter of the domestic animals it is prudent to assign to the gods, a part of the flesh that serves man as food. If the gods are deprived of their share, they might avenge themselves. The prosperity of the rest of the domestic animals and even of man's own existence may be imperilled. Besides, the idea often exists that malevolent spirits and gods of dubious moral character are envious of men because of the good things that they enjoy. To propitiate them and to escape their visitations, the primitive worshipper considers himself bound to allot to them a part of what he consumes himself. Even the

highly-cultured Greek had much to say about "the envy of the

The species of animal selected for sacrifice is nearly always one domesticated by the worshippers themselves. The Lapps offered to their gods of their numerous reindeer, the ancient Peruvians of their llamas. The latter, one is expressly told, never sacrificed to their gods wild animals, such as the game killed in hunting.

In the higher cultures, sacrifices as a rule are performed in special houses dedicated to the gods, called temples. But at earlier stages of religious evolution the god is also generally sought in a special sacred place where he is supposed to dwell, and where the sacrifice can reach him as directly as possible. Strictly speaking, the Greek word *temenos*, from which the word "temple" is derived, means a portion of land "cut off". When the Greeks and Romans passed from their own land to that of strangers, they generally did so with hesitation and dread. The strange land was haunted by unknown spirits, in sympathy with or under the control of enemies. The first thing the Greeks did when occupying a foreign land by conquest or colonization, was to detach a portion of it, a *temenos*, to be the sacred abode of the invisible powers who haunted the district and who, perhaps, had been disturbed by the intruders. These *temenoi* were probably not chosen arbitrarily, but usually were places which differed in some striking way from the surrounding country and consequently were believed to be inhabited by a local spirit or god. [11]

But in olden times the Greeks offered sacrifices not only in the open air, on hills or in groves, but also in caves and caverns believed to be haunted by supernatural beings. Porphyry, the Neoplatonic philosopher, says that caves, through their mysterious character, are likely to fill the visitor with awe, and that the ancients used to consecrate caves to their gods even before they had found out how to build them temples. [12] Among the Teutons, as among different Finno-Ugrian tribes, it was the custom to offer sacrifices in sacred groves or in other localities looked upon as the abodes of special deities, these places generally being fenced round with a hedge. Only at the place where he is supposed to dwell can the god be approached with success. [13]

Real temples, therefore, occur comparatively late in the history of religions. They appear in proportion as the institution of sacrifice is developed. The complicated ritual, the images of

the gods, the sacrificial vessels, and other sacred objects, require protection against rain and wind. Moreover, the temples, with their adjacent and subsidiary buildings, frequently serve as habitations for a numerous priesthood, as was the case, for instance, in Egypt, Greece, Mexico, and Peru. The sumptuous Greek temples were of late origin, like the Persian fire temples, which do not appear until after the time of the Achæmenids. [14] The Indians of the Vedic time had no temples. As to the archaic American cultures, the two grand and sumptuous buildings which awakened admiration in the conquering Spaniards were the Peruvian temple of the Sun at Cuzco, built of finely polished stone blocks and covered inside with sheets of gold, and the Aztec *teokalli* at Mexico. The Mexican *teokalli*, however, was not a temple in the ordinary sense, but rather a gigantic altar with many stages. On the highest stage was the sacrificial stone where the numerous human sacrifices were performed.

These temples are "sanctuaries" in the proper sense of the word. Often a whole religious symbolism is associated with them. The Catholic view, according to which the Church is a place belonging not to the natural world but to the kingdom of God and permeated in all its details with holiness, can be paralleled in heathen polytheistic religions. The Persian fire temple, where the sacred fire was kept and the sacred drink *haoma* was prepared, was in fact, as Professor Lehmann says, "a small world of its own with the vaulting of the heaven and the depth of the sea, with trees and with rivers, and all elements, a microcosmos of Purity, through which the whole nature and the human life is purified and invested with divine powers." Purity, both external and internal, is also demanded of persons setting foot in the sacred temple room, and especially of him who performs the sacred rites.

The ritual of sacrifice itself and the ideas which are associated with it may, of course, be very different in different religions. For instance, those of the Finno-Ugrian peoples were quite primitive. Their sacrifices were sometimes privately performed by individuals or families, sometimes public ceremonies performed in common by whole village communities. The worship of the dead and family ritual played an important part among the tribes of the Finno-Ugrian stock.

In the private cult, the sacrifices were performed by the

family father or mother, minor offerings of animals' skins, birds, eggs, fish, butter, milk, ale, etc., being presented to the spirits. The aim of these offerings of course was to promote the happiness and welfare of the individual family. But when the prosperity of the whole tribe was in question, sacrifices were offered on a large scale. On such occasions the assistance of the priest was considered necessary, and the sacrifices were both numerous and costly. [15] The ritual, for instance among the Ostyaks, was as follows: the sacrificial animal, having been severely handled with various weapons, was led in a half-dead condition three times round the idol, and then stabbed. The blood was allowed to flow down into certain sacred vessels; some of it was drunk by those who performed the sacrifice, with the rest the idol was smeared round the mouth. Together with the head, feet, and the tail, the skin was hung up in a tree in the neighbourhood. The flesh was then boiled amidst the singing of songs and great rejoicing. After the repast, the figure of the idol was smeared with fat. Lastly the god, who was believed to have taken part personally in the feast, was allowed to return to the heavens. [16]

Very solemn were the common sacrificial feasts among the Votyaks, in which several village communities took part. The sacrifices were directed, partly to the evil spirit Lud—originally the name of the grove where sacrifices were offered to the powers of Evil—partly to the real gods in other groves, where prayers were also addressed to them. [17]

Of a similar character were the sacrifices of the Veda religion in which, as is well known, they form the central feature. Originally the Vedic sacrifice was simply a banquet arranged in honour of the gods, who were the invited guests. The fire, the offerings, and the hymns caused the gods to appear and take their seat on the sacred lawn which spread before the altar. Every kind of food and drink thought likely to please the gods was presented, cakes of corn and rice, milk and butter, the fat and flesh of the sacrificial animals, and above all the sacred drink soma. Incense, music, and dancing, as well as eulogies and hymns, were believed to add to the enjoyment of the divine guests. Certain self-interested calculations, however, were connected with this entertainment. The people expected the gods to show their gratitude towards the givers by helping them, by protecting them against evil spirits and sickness, by granting

them wealth and honour, children and cattle and a long life. *Do ut des*, "I give you in order that you may give me," was the principle upon which the Vedic cult was based. [18] This element of self-interest, however, did not prevent the Vedic sacrifice from having at the same time a purifying and atoning significance in the primitive sense of the words.

Moreover, in these sacrifices, as in those of the Finno-Ugrian peoples, the "sacramental" idea also finds expression to a certain extent, although not in the sense in which this word is used in Robertson Smith's well-known theory of sacrifice. The sacrificial animal was not divine—neither in itself nor through its consecration to the gods—still less was it a totem god. But since, according to the primitive view, also partly preserved at higher stages of culture, the common meal unites all those taking part in it with invisible bonds, sacrificial meals such as those referred to, in which both gods and worshippers take part, unquestionably took on to a certain extent the character of communion feasts.

An intimate relationship between those who made the sacrifice and the animal sacrificed was considered necessary. Hence the sacrificial animals were nearly always domestic animals, which primitive people regard as their kindred. On the other hand, there had to be a certain similarity between the sacrificial animal and the god or gods to whom the sacrifice was directed. To powers of light, white animals were offered, to the gods of the under-world, black animals, etc. Through the sacrificial act, the animal was consecrated to the god. This being so, it was natural that a certain relationship was, through the common meal, established between the god and his worshippers. While this idea certainly has a place in a religious institution like the Vedic sacrifice, it was hardly the dominant consideration. The main object of the rite was evidently more practical, namely, to make the gods comply with the desires of man.

Even the Greeks were familiar with the sacrificial meal. In particular, the so-called *theoxenia* were essentially "meals of the gods", that is, banquets in which the gods eat together with their worshippers. The Greek sacrifices belonged to two wholly different categories, according as they were directed to the heavenly light gods or to the spirits of the departed or heroes. Sacrifices to the former were called *thysia*; they had to be

performed in the morning or at noon, and consisted of white animals. When sacrifices were made to the light gods, certain parts of the sacrificial animal were burnt. The gods were believed to delight particularly in the smoke rising to the sky. The burnt-sacrifices were performed on high altars, which in some cases were made of the ashes of the animals sacrificed and burnt. The offerings to the spirits of the departed and chthonic deities were called *spagia*. They were performed at night, and the sacrificial animals had to be black. The altars used were lower. In the middle was a hole through which the blood of the sacrificial animal was allowed to flow down into the grave. The worshippers were not allowed to consume any portion of a sacrifice offered to the gods of the under-world. Whoever did so consecrated himself at the same time to the powers of the under-world. [19] Even the Greek sacrifices had a practical aim, inasmuch as the favour of the god was believed largely to depend on the number of the sacrifices. At the great feasts, hecatombs, or sacrifices consisting of a hundred oxen, were sometimes offered, and in times of great distress and public calamity even human sacrifices might be made.

From what has been said, the blood sacrifices no doubt were originally founded on the idea that the gods would literally consume if not the entire sacrifice, at any rate its essence or spiritual part. But magical ideas of different kinds may also be associated with the sacrifice. Even though there is no reason to assume with one writer that sacrifice is in general derived from magic, magical sacrifice plays a much more important part in the lower religions than has commonly been realized.

First and foremost, sacrifice may be magical in the sense that it is believed to exert an irresistible influence on the god to whom it is addressed. To this category, for instance, belongs the sacrifice which Dr. Westermarck mentions from Morocco, called *l'ar*. Here the animal sacrificed serves as a vehicle for the transference of a conditional curse, through which a person or supernatural being can be compelled to grant a request. [20] The Veda religion serves as another interesting example of sacrifice with a similar magical significance. Here there was not merely a question of the moral constraint exerted by the sacrifice because of its being in the nature of a barter. The Vedic sacrifice was also supposed to exercise a physical constraint upon the gods, compelling them in a sense to become the servants of man.

This power was primarily due to the prayer pronounced by the chief priest or brahman at the sacrificial act. "The gods grow by the sacrifice," we are told in the Veda, "they get their power from the offering; thus Indra is always strengthened by the soma." "As the ox bellows for rain, so Indra is longing for soma." The soma drives him onwards like powerful gusts of wind. He takes his weapons from the offering; men forge the thunderbolt for him, put his arms in motion, [21] etc. The magical character of sacrifice is clearly brought to light in such statements of the Veda.

But the sacrifice may above all be magical in the sense that it transfers to the god the power which is hidden in the sacrificial victim, especially in those parts such as the blood, the heart, and so forth. In order fully to understand this we have to grasp an idea which is of considerable importance in the religion of uncivilized peoples. We find it natural that such peoples consider man to be dependent on the gods, but we have more difficulty in understanding the reverse idea, namely, that the gods are dependent on man, and literally *need* the sacrifices and presents offered them. Yet this idea appears clearly in the sacrifices of many barbaric peoples.

Sir James Frazer [22] has rightly shown that the gods of savage peoples are not immortal but are subject to the same fate as men and animals, in so far as they may lose their power and even at last die. Where the regular course of things is supposed to be dependent on the life and vigour of a god, or a heavenly body—for instance the sun—in which he is incarnate, dire catastrophes may be expected from the gradual failing of his powers and his final extinction in death. Many peoples used to offer sacrifices to the sun for this purpose. The offering made by the Vedic Brahman in the morning was supposed to produce the sun, and we are told that "assuredly it would not rise, were he not to make that offering." [23] The ancient Mexican sacrifices to the sun were typical instances of this kind. They regarded the sun as the source of all vital force and therefore named him Ipalmehohuani, *i.e.* "He by whom men live." Since they lived in constant fear of the sun losing his power, and no longer dispensing warmth and life, they offered him the bleeding hearts of men and animals to help maintain his vigour and enable him to run his course across the sky. [24] The Mexican sacrifices to the sun were thus designed, not so much to please and

propitiate him, as physically to renew his energies of heat, light and motion.

The sacrifices of the ancient Peruvians were essentially the same as those of the Aztecs. Even bloodless offerings, as we have seen, are common among the Quichuas and Aymara of the present day. As further instances in this category, illustrating the religious practices of the ancient Peruvians, their frequent offerings of *sea-shells* may be mentioned. These seem to have been exclusively offered to the spirits of the springs. The springs were objects of worship because their spirits were believed to promote fertility. Sometimes the shells were thrown into the springs whole, sometimes in pieces, sometimes they were ground into powder. The peculiar nature of the offering, and the way in which the shells were offered, suggest that there must have been special magical ideas connected with the rite.

As a matter of fact, one of the ancient Spanish chroniclers, the Father B. Cobo, S.J., assigns clearly the reason why sea-shells in particular were offered to the springs. "They say that this was a sacrifice very appropriate to the springs because the springs are daughters of the sea, which is the mother of the waters; and according to the colour the shells had they offered them for different purposes, sometimes entire, sometimes ground very fine, sometimes only broken and parted; they also used to form certain figures of their powder and mass." Cobo adds that the Peruvians offered these sacrifices to the springs when they had finished sowing, "in order that the springs may not dry out that year but flow abundantly and irrigate their sowings." [25] From these statements it is seen that, in the Peruvian shell-offerings to the springs, we have an interesting instance of sympathetic magic. The shells, being "daughters of the sea", contained something of the water-power of the great ocean, and this power was transmitted to the springs by offering sea-shells to them so that they would be enabled always to bring forth water.

Among the Peruvians, the sacrifices to the higher gods generally consisted of llamas. The llamas were looked upon as sacred animals because the souls of the dead were believed to transmigrate into them. At the great feast, at any rate, the sacrifices were performed in front of the statues of the most important gods, the Creator, the Sun, the Thunder and Lightning. The following method was observed at the sacrificial act,

notably when llamas were offered. After having led the animal several times round the idol, the priest seized it by the right shoulder and turned its eyes towards the god to whom the sacrifice was to be made. He then made a special prayer offering it to the god, and thereupon cut the throat of the victim. The prayer seems to have been rather stereotyped and consisted primarily of the phrase: "O Creator, Sun, Thunder and Lightning, may you ever remain young, may you never grow old." This prayer was directed in particular to the Sun. He was also besought to appear every day clear and benign, and never to conceal his rays, so that the plantations might prosper. [26]

The procedure of leading the sacrificial victim round the idol and turning its eyes towards the god before killing it was evidently not merely a symbolical act, but had real significance. The idol itself was a fetish in which the supernatural power of the god was concentrated much in the same way as the electric force is concentrated in a battery. Just as one needs to recharge an electric battery from time to time, so the Peruvians considered it necessary to augment the power of their gods. This was effected by means of the sacrifice. The blood of the llama, it must be understood, contained the same spiritual power as the fetish-idol itself.

That this was in reality the idea underlying the sacrifices may be inferred in particular from the prayer formula which accompanied them. Usually gods are besought by their worshippers for all sorts of material benefits which they have it in their power to bestow, but the request that they should "ever remain young and never grow old" is singular. In summing up his statements concerning the Peruvian cult, Father Cobo stresses the fact that this was the real object of the sacrifices, at least when addressed to the sun. "The advantages which resulted from this," he says "were two: the one to thank him for his care in illuminating the earth and helping it to produce what is necessary for the sustenance of men," the other "to give him strength always to do so." [27] The true motive for the sacrifice is undoubtedly indicated in the latter part of Cobo's statement. The power of the god, in other words, his ability to send warmth and fertility, depended on the sacrifices offered to him by his worshippers. The same idea is expressed even more often in connection with human sacrifices.

I may remark, however, that the ideas referred to were by no

means limited to peoples of the New World. The Lapps, for instance, in sacrificing to the god of lightning, used to smear his hammer with blood, evidently thinking that in this way its efficacy was enhanced. As has been mentioned with regard to the sacrifices of the Ostyaks, these people used to smear the image of their god with blood and fat. In such cases there is no question of feeding the gods in the ordinary sense of the words. Their object was to impart strength to him and thus enable him to continue helping his worshippers.

As regards human sacrifices, Dr. Westermarck has advanced the theory that, in their different forms, they are based mainly on the idea of substitution: one life is offered with a view to saving other individuals whose lives are in danger. Angry and revengeful gods must be appeased with human victims, thus gratifying their appetite for human flesh and blood. In other cases, an angry god may be appeased simply by the death of the person or persons who aroused his anger. [28]

That human sacrifices are based on these ideas in some cases cannot be doubted. But it is equally certain that there is an important category of human sacrifices which are founded on entirely different ones. I have already mentioned the magical character of the Mexican sacrifices to the sun. Fundamentally the same were the numerous human sacrifices consisting of captives and slaves to the god of war, Huitzilopochtli. The human sacrifices of the Aztecs were generally performed in this manner. The victim, with hands and feet tied together, was thrown on his back upon the sacrificial stone on the top of the *teokalli*, whereupon the priest cut open his breast with a stone knife, tore out the heart and offered it, still palpitating, to the god. [29] Since the heart is regarded as the seat of the soul or vital power, the magical character of these sacrifices may be inferred.

At the worship of the god of war it was customary to skin the victims, after which their skins and skulls were hung up as trophies, as it were, in the temple. In this case also we meet with the idea of a transference of power. It is the god of war who gives the warriors strength and success, but that this may be possible, his own power must be regularly revived, and this is done by means of human sacrifices.

The same idea evidently underlay the human sacrifices to the god of Thunder and War, Tor, among the ancient Scandi-

navians. These were performed before a military expedition. The heads of the victims were crushed and their bodies suspended in the sacred grove at Upsala. [30] In this case, too, we are probably not dealing with a propitiation of the god in the ordinary sense of the word; the object of the rite was rather to augment, in a purely mechanical way, the source of power from which the strength, courage and success of the warriors was derived.

This idea is clearly seen in those human sacrifices which aim at promoting fertility, or putting an end to or preventing famine.

Among many savage and barbarous peoples, blood sacrifices of human victims are performed in connection with agriculture. These often take place under circumstances which make it impossible to explain them as propitiatory or substitutional. One of the best instances is supplied by the Khonds or Khands of India, who at one time used to offer a human victim to their earth-goddess, Tari Pennu, in order to secure an abundant crop, immunity from disease and accidents, and general prosperity.

Our knowledge of these rites comes from accounts written by British officers in the middle of the last century, and a full description of them is given by Sir James Frazer. [31] Somewhat different methods were followed in the different villages. In some places they took the victim in a procession round the village from door to door, when some plucked hair from his head, and others begged for a drop of his spittle, with which they anointed their heads. When the victim had been killed, the priest divided the body into two portions. One of these he offered to the earth-goddess, by burying it in a hole in the ground with his face averted. The other portion of the flesh he divided into as many shares as there were heads of houses present. Each of these rolled his share of flesh in leaves, and buried it in his favourite field, placing it in the earth behind his back. In some places each man carried his portion of flesh to the stream which watered his fields, and there hung it on a pole. The remains of the human victim were finally burned and the ashes were either scattered over the fields, laid as paste over the houses and granaries, or mixed with the new corn to preserve it from insects. [32]

Dr. Westermarck explains this rite as a sacrifice to appease the wrath of the earth-goddess and holds that, like most human sacrifices, it was substitutional in character. [33] For my own part I think Sir James Frazer is quite right in pointing out that details connected with the treatment of the victim—Meriah as it

was called by the Khands—both before and after death, make it impossible to explain the custom merely as a propitiatory sacrifice. His own explanation is that “to the body of the Meriah there was ascribed a direct or intrinsic power of making the crops to grow, quite independent of the indirect efficacy which it might have as an offering to secure the goodwill of the deity”; and that “the flesh and ashes of the victim were believed to be endowed with a magical or physical power of fertilizing the land”. [34] I found exactly the same idea underlying Peruvian human sacrifices. But one need not assume, as Sir James Frazer does, that the Meriah originally represented “the Earth-Goddess or, perhaps, a deity of vegetation”. [35] The fact is that a human victim, independent of whether it is regarded as “divine” or not, is believed in itself to possess a spiritual or magical power—a power specially seated in the blood of the victim—which can be transferred to the object of the sacrificial act. This I take to have been the real character of the human sacrifice of the Khands, both when it was offered to their earth-goddess or tutelary spirit and when it was buried directly in the fields.

Human sacrifices for crops have, moreover, been found in North and South America. As a rule they take place at the sowing of the fields, at harvest time, or at the beginning of the rainy or the dry season. Specially interesting in this respect was the sacrifice of a Sioux girl by the Pawnees in 1837 or 1838, of which several writers have given accounts. The girl was fourteen or fifteen years old, and had been kept for six months and well treated. On the day appointed for the sacrifice she was shot to death with arrows, whereupon the leader of the rites tore out her heart and devoured it. While her flesh was still warm, it was cut in small pieces from the bones, put in little baskets, and taken to a neighbouring corn-field. There the head chief took a piece of the flesh from a basket and squeezed a drop of blood upon the newly-deposited grains of corn. His example was followed by the rest, till all the seed had been sprinkled with the blood. The seeds were then covered over with earth. According to one account, the body of the victim was reduced to a kind of paste. This was rubbed or sprinkled not only on the maize, but also on the potatoes, the beans, and other seeds to fertilize them. By this sacrifice they hoped to obtain plentiful crops. [36]

If we prefer to call this peculiar rite a "sacrifice", we must admit at least that it differed greatly from sacrifices of the common pattern. First of all, the sacrifice is not said to have been offered as a propitiation to any god, nor does it appear that the victim herself was regarded as divine. On the other hand, there is unmistakable evidence that the body of the victim was attributed with an intrinsic power which could be directly transmitted to the seeds. The paste made of the body and then rubbed or sprinkled on the crops to fertilize them, offers an interesting parallel to that prepared from the ashes of the Meriah among the Khands, which was laid over the houses and granaries, or mixed with the new corn.

In South America too, human sacrifices of this kind were by no means unknown. The magical power ascribed to blood, even independent of the sacrifice proper, is seen in a practice of the mountain Indians of Peru recorded by von Tschudi. On the day of San Antonio, the natives of Acobamba prepared a great feast. All the men were assembled on the plaza, divided into two parties, and began to fight fiercely, until some fell down wounded or dead. The women then rushed forth among the men, collected the flowing blood, and guarded it carefully. The object of this barbarous fighting, we are told, was to obtain human blood. This was interred afterwards in the fields with a view to securing an abundant crop. [37]

I may remark in this connection that the practice of head-hunting, as it occurs among a tribe like the savage Jibaros, is based partly on the same ideas as the offering of human blood to the fields in the instance just mentioned. After the great feast the trophy, as we know, is changed into a kind of fetish. One of the benign virtues ascribed to it is that it will promote the increase of domestic animals and make the crops grow. [38] The power of the trophy with which the victor himself is invested, is transferred to the soil and will thus produce an abundant crop. Among others this idea explains why *women* play the most important part at the dances and other ceremonies with which the acquisition of a human head is celebrated. Among the natives in the interior of Luzon, one of the Philippine Islands, the same kind of head-hunting is practised as a means of promoting the fertility of the fields. [39]

In the ancient Inca empire, human sacrifices were practised in some cases, although they do not seem to have been very

common. The most important occasion for them was when the Inca succeeded to the throne, and numerous children were sacrificed on his behalf. I have given, elsewhere, a detailed description of these and other sacrifices of the ancient Peruvians and of the ideas evidently underlying them. [40] According to my explanation, they were purely magical in character. The political constitution of the Inca empire was a so-called theocracy. The Inca was absolute ruler, being regarded as the real offspring and human representative of the sun-deity himself. According to the firm conviction of the Peruvians, the welfare of the whole community was intimately bound up with the welfare of the Inca, so intimately in fact, that the senility of the divine king and his final death entailed great danger for his subjects. First of all, therefore, they did all they could to preserve his strength and prolong his life by sacrifices and prayers. Human sacrifices were, therefore, also offered when the Inca fell ill. When the final catastrophe came, the great concern of the people was that the power of the old Inca might pass to his successor, the new representative of the sun, without any disturbance in the regular course of nature. This was effected by means of human sacrifices. That *children* should be sacrificed on such occasions may also perhaps be satisfactorily explained from a magical point of view: the idea seems to have been that *young* lives had to be offered for the Inca if his own life was to be effectively prolonged.

There are other human sacrifices which are essentially rites of substitution and atonement, but since these are especially characteristic of the barbarous stage of culture, I shall not deal with them here. We now come to the other main element of religion, that is, prayer.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PRAYER

IN its original form prayer is nothing more than a request directed to a supernatural being with a view to making him comply with the wishes of man. As is the case with sacrifice, prayer aims partly at averting evils caused by spirits or gods, partly at gaining positive favours. In primitive culture, however, prayer on the whole has little importance in comparison with sacrifice or offerings. Uncivilized peoples consider that the gods, selfish like themselves, are little inclined to grant man a favour except for a consideration, that is, unless the verbal address is accompanied by a present. At low stages of culture prayer has its greatest importance as a magical means of control, through which a certain amount of pressure can be exerted upon the will of the gods.

As we have seen, primitive worship is largely prompted by self-interest. The most important concern of man at the lower stages of cultural development is to maintain his material existence. Hence we can understand why the prayers of primitive peoples invariably refer to material benefits, such as protection from sickness and misfortune, rain and fertility for the fields, success in fishing, hunting, and war, numerous children, and so forth. And since the religion has no relation to the moral ideas of the worshipper, his state of mind, of course, is likewise a matter of indifference to the gods.

Just as primitive gods are not all-good and righteous, so they lack the qualities of omnipresence and omniscience. In speaking of sacrifice, we found that it is considered very important to seek the god at a place where he can receive the offerings direct. The same may be said of prayer, as far as it occurs independently of sacrifice. The most essential thing is to come into direct contact with the god. Among Aryan peoples, one meets with the idea that the heavenly powers can best be addressed in prayer at times when they appear to be open, so that the divinities are particularly accessible to the prayers of man.

The Greeks, when praying to the heavenly powers, used to extend the hands with the palm upwards, as if wishing, in a literal sense, to receive something from above. When praying to the god of the sea, they stretched their hands towards the sea, while in praying to the powers of the underworld, they either stamped on the ground in order to attract their attention, or sat down. [1]

The position and attitude presented in prayer are, in many ways, of great interest, having partly a social, partly a magical or religious explanation. Throwing oneself down on the ground or touching it with the forehead as well as kneeling are attitudes which express humility and submission. The averting attitude with hands stretched out has a magical significance and aims at protecting the praying person against evil influences coming from the person or god to whom the prayer is addressed. The swinging of the head, the clapping of hands, springing up, and other vehement movements during prayer are expressions of ecstasy. In higher religions such gestures are either the spontaneous expression of an inner sentiment, or have a purely symbolic meaning ascribed to them. At a low stage of culture they have a practical aim, being the natural manifestation of a simple and naive conception of godhead.

Still more naive is the idea that supernatural beings can be influenced not only by prayer in the ordinary sense of the word but also by praise, flattery, and threats. Knowing from experience that men can be swayed by such means, the savage naturally makes use of them also in his relation to supernatural beings. Some of the natives of Sumatra worship as a god, among other things, the crocodile or alligator—naturally a very malignant and dangerous one. When they have to pass a river where crocodiles are known to live, they try to propitiate "Jalodeh, the great god", addressing him in the most flattering terms and with songs of praise, so that he may allow them to pass the river unharmed. But once safely on the other side, they may possibly give vent to their real feelings towards the dreaded spirit. [2]

The heathen Lapps, when they approached their fetishes, called *seita*, used to humiliate themselves in the most pitiable way. Crawling on all fours, and with cap in hand the Lapp dragged himself along to the idol, addressing the god in humble words. If he made a promise to offer the fetish a sacrifice in case of a favourable issue of his appeal, he always strictly kept that

promise. But on the other hand, if the god did not keep *his* promises, it sometimes happened that the humility of the Lapp changed to the other extreme. He threatened to withdraw his usual sacrifices, so that the god himself should suffer, and to abandon his *seita*. In some cases he even smashed the idol to pieces, or ill-treated it in some other way. [3]

Prayer is more important, however, when a magical element enters into it, that is, when it assumes the character of what I may call a *conjunction*. Even in prayer, religion and magic are so intimately connected, that a definite line of demarcation cannot be drawn. In many cases it is impossible to decide when a formula of prayer is purely religious, that is, merely an appeal to the good-will of the god, and when the words in themselves are believed to possess a magical power which exerts an irresistible constraint. Nor can one distinguish stages in religious evolution where prayer is a pure spell, or find a religion to which real prayer is entirely unknown. The words with which the medicine-men address the demons of sickness in order to make them leave the patient's body are generally pure conjurations. But, primitive peoples may also address tutelary spirits or supreme beings with prayers which apparently have little connection with magic. On the contrary, the magical element was well marked in the purification ceremonies of early Christianity, for instance, in its exorcisms and prayer formulae recited mechanically. Those who accept the theory of a pre-animistic stage of religious development assert, it is true, that in the evolution of religion, verbal conjunction preceded prayer, and Dr. Marett in his work, referred to above, has a chapter entitled "From Spell to Prayer". [4] But Dr. Marett arrives at this conclusion by a deductive rather than by an inductive method of reasoning. In many cases it can be shown that the course of evolution has been the very reverse, namely, that genuine prayers have become stereotyped into magical formulae of conjunction. The transition from prayer to spell often takes place quite unconsciously. Words serve to communicate wishes. They may, however, especially if pronounced with a certain emphasis or repeated frequently, work more or less suggestively, even exert a hypnotic influence, according to the strength of the will behind them. The magical efficacy of "words of power", and especially of the curse, is due to this fact.

On the whole, however, conjurations are given preference in

primitive cultures, and prayer in the higher religions. Formulae of conjuration, originally perhaps pure prayers, are met with both among uncivilized peoples of our own days, and among peoples of archaic culture such as the Indians, the Romans, the Babylonians, and the Egyptians. Certain prayers are used on much the same occasions or for much the same purposes. In this way they always assume much the same form. They may be handed down from one generation to another. The form of the prayer must always be the same; it cannot be changed. When in the course of time the language changes these forms may ultimately become unintelligible, at least to the great mass of the people. In this way they gradually change into stereotyped formulae to which a supernatural power, inherent in the words themselves, is ascribed, and which are supposed to work irresistibly on the gods. Their efficacy is usually dependent on their correct recitation in the very form in which they have been taught and handed down. A single wrong word, even a wrong accentuation, is likely to render a formula ineffective. To return to the question of the magical power of the word and the name. As already seen, the medicine-men in their conjurations invoke all those demons who are suspected to have caused the evil. As with these lesser spiritual beings, so with the names of the gods. To know the name is to enable the speaker to invoke the god and master him. Hence the gods generally try to keep their names secret, their worshippers being forbidden to mention them. The consequence is that, in a low or barbarous culture, nicknames are used for many gods.

A striking instance is the concealment of the name of the tutelary deity of Rome. Plutarch, in his *Roman Questions*, asks how it comes about that it is expressly forbidden at Rome either to name or to ask questions about the tutelary god in whose hands lie the safety and preservation of the city, even so much as to inquire whether the said deity is male or female? He answers himself, that it is due to superstitious fear and continues that "there are certain evocations and enchanting of the gods by spells and charms, through the power whereof they are of opinion that they might be able to call forth and draw away the tutelar gods of their enemies, and to cause them to come and dwell with them. Therefore the Romans be afraid lest they do as much for them. . . . So the Romans thought that to be altogether unknown and not once named was the

best means, and surest way to keep in with their tutelar god." [5]

According to Macrobius, this deity was Ops Consivia [6], the god of sowing, who would naturally be revered by an agricultural people.

We know, however, that the Romans chose this method by preference when dealing with the tutelary gods of other peoples. When laying siege to a town, the first step was for the priests to address the guardian deity of the town in a set form of prayer or incantation, inviting him to abandon the beleaguered city and come over to the Romans, who would offer him the same or a greater place in the Roman pantheon. This ceremony was called *evocatio deorum*, and for safety's sake the phrase was added: *sive deus, sive dea*, "Whether you be a god or a goddess." [7] If the tutelary god of the town had, by fair means or foul, been compelled to leave it, that town was *eo ipso* delivered up to the enemy.

The idea that the efficacy of prayer is enhanced by the solemn pronunciation of the god's name is found also in Greek religion. In the Greek liturgies one notes the anxious care with which particular qualifying epithets were selected and attached to the personal name of the divinity, in order to make clear the precise operation of divine favour which the prayer aimed at evoking. This may explain why so many divinities were invoked under the epithet *polyonyme*, "thou god of many names", all possible titles being summed up in one word. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* the chorus exclaims: "Zeus, whoever the god is, if this name of Zeus is dear to him, by this name I now appeal to him." [8] Similarly the importance of the name of the god is alluded to by Plato, when in his *Cratylus* he says: "It is our custom in our prayers to call the gods by whatsoever name they most rejoice to be called by." [9] Again, in the Vedic religion Agni is a "god with many names." "Agni, many are the names of thee the Immortal one"; and further: "The father adoring gives many names to thee, oh Agni, if thou shouldest take pleasure therein." [10]

An equally great importance is attached to the name of the god in Semitic religions. That stern commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" may refer to the dangers connected with the pronouncing of the

holy name of the god. Instead of the holy name of Jahwe or Jehovah, the Israelites used names like Adonai or Elohim, or the god is anonymous, "the name" being the phrase adopted. [11] In ancient Chaldean religion magic in different forms played an important part, but no magical words of power were equal in efficacy to the names of the gods. To these names, everything in the heaven, on the earth, and under the earth had to submit.

It is interesting to note the extent to which similar magical ideas prevailed in the early Christian Church, especially in connection with the exorcism of evil spirits which formed so essential a part of its ritual. The supernatural efficacy of the exorcism was clearly due, moreover, to the magical power of the sacred name. Of all ecclesiastical writers, Origen is the one who expresses most plainly the view which reveals the intimate connection between the magic of heathenism and that of Christianity. In his polemical tract directed against Celsus, this Christian Father finds, among other things, an opportunity to examine the nature of both heathen and Christian magic. In doing so, he develops a true "philosophy of names." He asks whether names exist *physei* or *thesei*, i.e. exist "by nature" or "depend on an arbitrary arrangement", and expresses agreement with the former opinion. According to him, what is called magic is not an altogether unknown quantity but, as those skilled in it prove, a consistent system.

Among the Hebrews, for example, the names Sebaoth and Adonai and the others treated with so much reverence are not applicable to ordinary created things but belong to a secret theology referring to the Framer of all things. When these names are pronounced with that attendant train of circumstances appropriate to their nature, they possess great power, otherwise not. A similar philosophy of names, Origen continues, applies also to Jesus. His name has already been seen, in an unmistakable manner, to have expelled myriads of evil spirits from the souls and bodies of men. So great is the power it exerted on those from whom the spirits were driven out that there are instances even of wicked men being able to work miracles by merely pronouncing it. Origen adds that incantations of this kind can accomplish what the spell professes to do only when they are uttered in the right language; when translated into another tongue they are liable to become ineffective and feeble. Therefore, even unto death, the Christians

struggle to avoid calling God by the name Zeus or a name from any other tongue. [12]

In addition to this primitive belief in the extraordinary power of magical incantations to expel evil spirits, there existed in early Christianity an equally remarkable belief in the magical efficacy of prayer itself. Just as, in baptism for instance, it was considered possible to exorcise evil spirits "in the name of Jesus", so formulae of prayer in general seem to have been credited with a mysterious potency which exerted an irresistible influence upon God himself and put heavenly powers in motion. [13] Thus, when some Christian Fathers emphasize the importance of repeating the Lord's Prayer many times, its efficacy being thereby enhanced, one cannot help explaining this as reminiscent of pagan magical ideas hardly compatible with the lofty monotheism of Christianity.

Other kinds of prayer, such as a thanksgiving, penitential prayers, etc., have no place here. Although both prayers and offerings of thanksgiving are said to exist among some savage tribes [14], they are essentially unknown to primitive culture. Where they occur they must undoubtedly be attributed to the results of missionary teaching.

## CHAPTER XVII

### FUNERAL AND MOURNING CUSTOMS. THE CULT OF THE DEAD

**I**N the last chapter of my book I propose to deal with that important category of primitive religious customs which includes funeral and mourning rites and ceremonies. These, in their turn, are closely connected with the worship of the dead, and especially of ancestors.

Clearly the difference in burial customs among primitive peoples is largely due to their different beliefs as to the fate of the soul in the after-life, a question with which I cannot deal in detail in this work. It is not necessary to emphasize the great importance of such customs from the point of view of the history of religion. By studying the various forms of burial and the objects found in old graves, we have obtained information about the religious beliefs of many ancient peoples whose intellectual culture would otherwise have remained entirely unknown. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that a given practice does not in itself give sure knowledge as to the ideas which originally underlay it. The archaeological grave-finds, therefore, cannot be of real value for the history of religion until they are supplemented by the facts supplied by ethnology with regard to the religious beliefs of primitive peoples living to-day.

The earliest idea of a future life seems to have been that the soul, detached from the body, continued to exist in the neighbourhood of the dead body or in the grave, where the deceased found his last resting-place. We know of no tribe, however primitive, to whom this idea is not familiar. Even among more highly developed peoples who have elaborate dogmas concerning a realm of the dead, traces of this primitive notion are still to be found. The idea of a Hades, where all the dead are assembled, is also very common among peoples somewhat more advanced in culture, and tends to appear as the social and religious life develops.

In certain respects burial customs can be taken as a measure of value for the culture of a people. The more highly developed the people, the more attention they usually devoted both to the care of graves and to the preparation of the dead for burial. Customs such as those of the ancient Egyptians bear witness to a high civilization and correspond to their highly developed eschatological theories. On the other hand, there are people living almost in a state of nature who have nothing one can term burial practices. Fear of the dead, so deeply rooted in such people, causes them to flee from the corpse as soon as possible, for the dead are taboo, *i.e.* are possessed by the spirit of the dead.

It is related of the Sirionos—a primitive people in the interior of Bolivia, who have no fixed dwellings but wander about in the primeval forests—that they do not bury their dead at all, but leave the corpse on the spot where death took place and quickly desert the neighbourhood. At the most they leave a banana to feed him on his long journey. The Bushmen of South Africa treat their dead in much the same way; they leave the corpse where it fell, or heap stones over it and then hastily depart. Doubtless the primitive fishing and hunting peoples of ancient times had burial practices just as crude as these. As soon as permanent dwellings became usual it was found necessary to dispose of the dead body in some way.

There are many ways of doing this. Naturally they differ among different peoples, but in the main four types of burial can be distinguished: (1) burial in the ground; (2) placing the corpse on a species of platform; (3) burning; (4) burial in an urn. It must be emphasized, however, that the differences between these are merely relative. Some of them are often combined in treating one and the same person. Again, in the same tribe among some peoples different forms of burial are found; the decisive factors are the social position, the manner of death, and so on. Ideas concerning the abode of the dead and the manner of reaching it naturally influence burial customs. Some Polynesians, who imagine that the dead live on another island in the ocean, place the corpse in a canoe which is then pushed out to sea to help the departed on his journey thither.

In general, it may be said that primitive peoples are not as conservative in keeping to a single method of burial as has usually been assumed; the main consideration is that the corpse

should be got rid of as soon as possible, and the dangerous death infection neutralized. But even among some people who are slightly more developed, and in civilized or half-civilized societies, there arises another thought which is also expressed in their treatment of the dead, that is the need to make provision for the well-being of the departed in the other life.

Undoubtedly the simplest way to dispose of a corpse is to bury it in the earth. This is also the easiest way of getting rid of the dangerous death-demon, and is the most common method in the lower as well as the higher cultures, although many types can be distinguished.

Placing the corpse on a platform is fairly common in some parts of the world, *e.g.* in Australia and Polynesia, as well as in North and South America. Wundt thinks that this custom arose from the primitive practice of putting the body out in the open air near the spot where death occurred. At first the corpse was left stretched out on a heap of earth; then later a platform was erected on which it could rot away. [1] There is scarcely any ethnological support for this theory, and in any case it is unjustifiably generalized. The practice of erecting a platform for the dead may have originated in various ways; most frequently it is due to a disinclination to put the body in the earth, because of the difficulty of dismissing the idea that the dead person may continue his old life in some way.

This thought is found among the Jibaro Indians who practise the custom; they also bury their dead in the earth. If, for example, a woman or child dies, the corpse is buried in front of or even inside the house, but this does not prevent the rest of the family from continuing to live there. On the other hand, if the father dies, they are very particular about the disposal of his corpse, as it is considered most important for him to continue to inhabit the house where he lived. He may be placed in a sitting position in the middle of the house, for example, and bound fast to one of the poles supporting it. He may be bound and left standing at the entrance to the house, with the door open, so that it looks as if he were just entering.

The commonest method seems to be to lay the dead in a coffin, formed of a hollowed-out tree trunk, and to place it on a platform, against one of the walls inside the house, with his weapons, tools, food, etc., beside it. In such cases, the house is naturally abandoned by his survivors. Later, when one of

his wives or children dies, the corpse is placed on the platform beside the coffin of the husband or father, so that gradually a family grave is formed. After some time the bodies decay and the platform and even the house begin to fall to pieces. The remains are then buried in the usual way in the earth. In any case the dead are so placed inside the hut that the illusion of their continuing to live is preserved as long as possible. [2]

It is related of the Winnebagos—members of the great Sioux and Dakota tribes—that they sometimes bury their dead in a sitting position. The body is dressed in full ceremonial attire, and, if a wooden coffin is unobtainable, it is wrapped in bark. Sometimes the parents place their children on a platform, so as to have them always in sight. [3] Sometimes the dead are treated like this in response to a wish expressed when alive. Often, however, the procedure is followed simply because it avoids the difficulty of digging in the frozen ground.

The reason for disposing of the dead above ground is probably the fear of the harm which the earth may cause him and his spirit; the process of decomposition, too, is more rapid in the ground, and, as this is just what many people wish to hinder, they eschew earth-burial. In this way they think it easier to protect the dead from the evil spirits which cause decay, and to preserve that part of the body which they are most anxious to keep, namely the bones.

In this connection may be mentioned the curious burial customs of the ancient Persians before the days of Zarathustra. The ancient Medes appear to have exposed their dead on a mountain or some desolate place. In the Avesta it is ordained that the corpse shall be placed naked on the roof of a high building, "the tower of tranquillity" (silence), *dakhma*, where it can dry in the air or be devoured by vultures and dogs. As is well known, this procedure is connected with definite ideas characteristic of the Avesta religion. The dead body was an extremely unclean thing, and it was necessary to protect the holy elements—earth, fire, and water—from contamination. As this belief excluded both earth-burial and cremation, and it was equally impossible for the corpse to be left to fight the rivers or the sea, the method described was conceived. For the same reason Avesta doctrine condemned the old Persian method of burning the dead. [4]

As has already been mentioned, many people try to arrange that their dead continue to a certain extent the life they have lived upon earth. If they do not allow them to occupy the house in which they lived, they often erect a little hut over the grave. These may be of the most diverse kind, from the primitive dolmens and stone graves customary among the Indo-Europeans of the Early Stone Age to the enormous pyramids or magnificent burial chambers hewn in the rocks prepared by the early Egyptians for their dead rulers. In South America it is often considered sufficient to erect a crude roof over the grave, resting on four pillars. The Aimara in Peru made these small huts of stones placed one upon another; to this day these graves are called by the name of the spirit imprisoned in them, *chulpa*. [5]

A further development of the Indo-European Stone Age dolmens were the great barrows erected in the Bronze Age for dead chiefs and kings. Even in the Early Stone Age it was customary to furnish the dead with all kinds of weapons, vessels, tools, and ornaments; a chief also had his horse buried with him. [6] The idea that the dead should have his property with him in his grave—sometimes even living property in the form of his wives and children—is so familiar from the polytheistic religions that one need not quote examples here.

In contrast to this, special interest is attached to the way in which different peoples prepare the dead body to prevent its decaying. In general, one may say, all such practices originate in solicitude for the well-being of the departed in the future life. So that existence shall continue after death, the most important parts of the body at least must be preserved. According to primitive belief, each part of the body contains something of the spirit or the soul, but especially those parts which withstand decomposition the longest, the skull and the bones. If these are destroyed, the whole being is annihilated, soul as well as body. [7] Both cannibalism and head-hunting, the custom of eating the flesh and destroying the bones of a slain enemy, are explained from this point of view. Annihilation is the most terrible fate that primitive people can imagine.

In this connection, one may mention that should the Jibaro Indians, who are of course head-hunters, come across by chance the body of one of their own tribe from which the head has been taken by the enemy, they do not take the trouble to give it

"honourable burial"; at the most they cover it with some leaves and twigs and then quickly leave the place. The soul is no longer in the body, it went with the victor who took the head, so no longer is there any reason to bother about the remains. If a man is killed in war, his relatives rescue his body as quickly as possible, before the enemy has time to cut off his head. [8] In strong contrast to the barbarous war practices is the loving preservation of the body of a dead relative, so that he may continue his life after death and even, perhaps, at some future time be re-born into a new earthly existence.

Such considerations are also connected with the careful embalming of the bodies of kings and other great persons among the ancient Egyptians. Similar attempts to preserve the dead body were made by many other peoples. Among the Incas and Chibchas of old Peru and Columbia in South America, peoples at a high stage of civilization, burial customs and preservation methods are found which recall those of the Egyptians. There, archæological excavations have brought to light both burial articles in extremely good condition and very well-preserved bodies. The reason for the good state of preservation of the Peruvian bodies is to be found in the extremely dry climate, but embalming and other methods of artificial preservation are also found, although as in Egypt, they were only practised for the dead Inca rulers and nobles.

The Inca rulers were even deified, and their mummies placed among the other great gods in the Temple of the Sun at Cuzco. As well as rulers, men of high rank had the privilege of being mummified after death. This was usually done by drying the body in the cold air on a high mountain. Common people were buried in graves and their bodies allowed to rot unless prevented by the climate. The embalming was connected with the belief in a future resurrection or a re-birth of the dead. We have explicit information that this re-birth was regarded as possible only if the bodies were well-preserved. [9] The Chibchas of Columbia embalmed their princes by means of resin.

The desire to preserve the remains of the dead appears in a characteristic way in the so-called *after-burial*, found in South America, Polynesia and other places. Among the Bororó on the Rio Xingu in Brazil, the body is first buried in the forest, near the river. After some time it is dug up and all the remaining

flesh carefully removed; a burial feast is then held, after which the skeleton is again buried. Those of the dead man's relatives who are present cut their skin, and then the bones are carefully painted; the lower jaw is taken out, painted red with ochre and covered with feathers; the other bones are painted in the same way. Lastly the basket, in which all the bones are finally placed, is also painted. When the celebration is concluded—it may last for weeks—all the remains of the dead are re-buried. [10] Some tribes have the custom of placing all bones so treated in a large urn which is painted on the outside before being buried. A similar after-burial is found among the Goajiros on the peninsula of the same name. [11]

An extremely curious custom prevails among the Motilon Indians in Columbia. The dead man is buried in a hut and merely covered with straw, lying there until scarcely anything remains, during which time he is provided with food and drink and has the weapons placed beside him. The remains are then wrapped up together and a feast arranged, where the nearest male relative dances with the packet on his back. After that the packet is kept in the hut but without any food, and from time to time someone walks or dances carrying it. It is kept for a long time in the hut, but finally is carried with shrieks and the shooting of arrows to a special spot where the dead are laid under a projecting rock so that the rain shall not fall on them. Here we see a real cult of the dead, based mainly upon the principle that the bones of the dead person, which still contain his spirit, must be preserved. [12]

At one time the Maori of New Zealand had a "bone-scraping ceremony" which reminds one, in many respects, of the Indians of Brazil. About one year after the death, the relatives gathered from far and near. When the chiefs arrived at the spot or canoe where the body lay they touched it with a twig, after which the remains were carried to a decorated place, and laid on a bed of leaves with every remaining piece of flesh carefully scraped away. A priestess took the skull on her knee and songs were sung. All were now taboo to such a high degree that they could eat only with the help of long fern-stalks and drink only by means of the liquid being poured into the mouth from above. The bones were then painted with red ochre, the skull decorated with valuable feathers and publicly exhibited for a time, after which they were re-buried. [13]

Primitive peoples, as has already been mentioned, believe that decomposition is caused by evil spirits attacking the corpse. Many burial rites aim at protecting it from these invisible enemies. It is provided with magical amulets such as are used by the living. In America they used to throw broken pottery into the grave, sometimes even placing a number of whole clay vessels in or around it. The breaking of earthen vessels at a burial has acquired a ceremonial character. [14] In such cases there is no thought of providing the departed with vessels—much less with broken ones—for the other life. These “sacrificial gifts” are, in reality, amulets.

The difficulty of permanently preserving even such parts of the body as the skull and bones, in conflict with the desire to keep a material substratum for the soul, has given rise to another burial practice—*the burning of the body*. Nowhere, apparently, was this the original custom; almost everywhere it was preceded by the custom of earth-burial. This is so, for example, in India, where burning was a very ancient practice and even occurs to-day among many Indian races. The Vedas mention both earth-burial and the burning of the corpse, but the former practice was the earlier. [15] The ancient Persians also burned their dead. But they maintained at the same time what was probably the still older custom of burying them.

Burning the dead found its way into Europe as early as the second millennium B.C., but not into the North until the early bronze age. On the other hand the Jewish race everywhere kept to earth-burial. If, as it would seem, the dead were burned in old Babylonian times, the custom was probably inherited from the older Sumerian culture. Some tribes in North and South America have also practised the custom of burning their dead relatives.

The comparatively sudden appearance of cremation in the North during the later bronze age can be explained by the connecting of this practice with a radical change in religious ideas. To quote M. P:n. Nilsson, it is derived from “the desire of the survivors to be rid of the dead, their troublesome claims on the living, and the danger of their malevolence.” “By this total destruction of the body, they believed they would be free from ghosts.” By the smoke which rose from the burning, they presumed that the soul would also be compelled to rise

to heaven. [16] But a closer investigation of the way in which the ashes and bones of a burned corpse were treated, should have prevented such a complete misconception of the importance of this burial custom. If the ashes are scattered to the winds, as was done at one time in Germanic and other lands with the burned remains of a criminal, and by the Catholic Church with those of a heretic burned at the stake, there is clear evidence of a desire to annihilate the dead, body and soul. But with the ashes of beloved relatives who have been burned the procedure is quite otherwise. They are most carefully preserved in an urn or in some other way.

Burning the dead does not in any way imply a change in religious ideas. The process of thought is precisely the same as before. It was simply a more practical way introduced, for example, here in Northern Europe under foreign influence of attaining the main object, the preservation of some part of the body. [17] Not out of consideration for their own safety did they burn the body, but out of solicitude for the dead relative's welfare in the other world. This becomes clear from a more detailed study of the associated ritual. The Indians, for example, did not think for a moment that the fire would consume *the whole* of the body, in which case the soul would also be destroyed. This is seen from the fact that they prayed at the same time to Agni that he would not harm the dead. Afterwards, when they buried the half-burned bones in the ground, they prayed that the soil should not press upon him but shelter him in friendliness. [18] E. Lehmann explains this by the persistence of ideas associated with the old custom of earth-burial after the introduction of the new ritual. But we have no right and no reason to assume such incomprehensible inconsistency either among the Indians or any other people.

Although comparatively usual in North America—*e.g.* among the so-called North West Indians—cremation is found among only a few tribes in South America; but the observations to be made in these cases are characteristic. The French explorer, Crévaux, relates of the Roucouyenne Indians that when one of them is dying, his relatives and friends show their friendship by carrying in large quantities of wood to let him see what they are preparing for his funeral pyre. When dead, he is dressed in his finest clothes and ornaments, after

which the body is burned. The ashes and what remains of the bones are preserved in an urn in the widow's hut. A year later they are buried in the earth with appropriate ceremonies. [19] The Guahivos of Venezuela also burn their dead, then collect the burnt bones, crush them in a mortar and hide them in his house in a tightly woven basket. When they move or go on a journey, they take with them the burned bones of their forefathers. [20] The Tauaré in eastern Peru too, burn their dead and preserve the ashes in tubes. At each meal some of this horrible seasoning is mixed with the food and eaten. A similar "endo-cannibalism" is practised by some Brazilian tribes; the object is said to be "to propagate the soul of the departed by means of the living". [21]

These examples should be enough to show clearly that the burning of a dead person is no act of enmity, but, on the contrary, a specially kind deed and act of friendship. As a matter of fact, this custom is only a radical step in the direction of the aim towards which many peoples of a higher culture strive, namely, the protection of the departed from the attacks of supernatural enemies and the preservation of some part of his body. Fire is, in fact, an effective means of purification. It rapidly consumes those parts of the corpse which especially tend to decay. After this purification something is left which cannot be annihilated, *the ashes*. In them the spirit of the departed is now concentrated; they are the seed from which, according to the idea of many peoples, a new human existence will in due time spring.

That is why the ashes are kept after the burning, with such great care and preserved frequently in beautifully painted urns, sometimes even in gold urns, as was done by the ancient Chibchas in South America. The burning of the dead has thus also a deeply religious significance; it is an act of piety towards the dead, and is intimately connected with the cult of the soul proper. [22]

Urn-burial has already been mentioned. As has been seen it often occurs in connection with after-burial. The custom was very widely extended among the natives of America; we find it both in the South and North. In the former hemisphere it was a special characteristic of the Guarani and Arawaks.

Two kinds of urn-burial can be distinguished. In the one

we find very large urns, very seldom painted, in which the whole of the dead body is placed—even that of an adult. This is the custom of the numerous Guarani tribes, e.g. the Chiriguanos in Bolivia. With the head pressed down between the knees the body is put in the urn and another urn placed on top as a lid. This "coffin" is then buried in the earth of the hut, in which, strangely enough, the survivors continue to live. The other kind of urn-burial consists in laying the bones or the ashes only in smaller urns, often beautifully painted; these are specially characteristic of the Arawaks living in the north of South America. The earlier Quimbayas of Columbia sometimes preserved the ashes of their chiefs in urns of gold, which were placed in deep vaults. [23]

Many curious magical conceptions are linked up with clay vessels in general, notably with burial urns, but we cannot go into these here. It may be mentioned, however, that the custom of putting the dead into urns has obviously sprung from the desire to protect their remains from the injurious effects of the damp earth and against the evil spirits who can bring about a re-birth. How precisely some of the more highly developed societies have thought out the matter is apparent from the fact that they place the corpse deliberately in the urn in the same position as the foetus had in the mother's womb, and that in some cases the urn itself is intended to symbolize the womb. [24] The existence of such conceptions is confirmed by many facts, among them the idea that the painted burial urns have a special magical protective power. Their ornamentation, often extraordinarily beautiful was originally not in the form of decoration but of magic symbols.

Up till now I have discussed chiefly those burial customs which are due to feelings of friendship and piety towards the dead. But, as is well known, practices and rites exist which originated in fear of the spirit of the dead, who was often thought to be burning for revenge. We have here, as a matter of fact, two conceptions apparently diametrically opposed, which sometimes seem to be combined even in relation to the same person, and which have therefore presented great difficulty to scientists.

It seems a curious contradiction that a person who was loved and esteemed when alive should, after death, often be feared as a revengeful and dangerous ghost. Historians of

religion have attempted to explain, by all kinds of purely psychological interpretations, this change that takes place in a person's character on death. The real solution is only found by those able to penetrate into the actual process of thought of the natives in regard to this matter.

Mr. Grubb states of the Lenguas in Paraguay that the departed souls of men, called *aphangak*, appear to take no interest in the living, nor, beyond causing uncanny feelings when supposed to be hovering about, do they seem in the least to influence those left behind. They retain their bodily and mental characteristics in the shade-land; a man who was kindly-natured in life remains so after death, and so forth. [25] Elsewhere he tells us, however, the death-spirits are feared to such an extent that the patient is abandoned when death seems imminent, or sometimes frequently buried before he is quite dead. "The whole village is left desolate save for a few awe-struck Indians who have been deputed to carry out the last dismal rites." Some of the rites performed before burying the corpse are very peculiar. One consists, for instance, in placing hot embers beneath the feet and on the head of the corpse. If the seat of trouble has been in the head they batter the skull with clubs, after the body has been placed in the grave; if in the region of the heart, arrows are shot into it, and sometimes a stake is driven through the shoulder and out below the ribs, thus pinning the body to the side of the grave. In the case of dropsy the body is shot at, and a bunch of herbs held by the man conducting the burial. This is burnt afterwards and each of the party swallows some of the smoke. A common rite is the cutting open of the side and the insertion into the wound of heated stones, an armadillo's claw, some dog's bones, and, occasionally, red ants. [26]

Mr. Grubb says that he did not understand all these rites, but obviously they were inspired by superstitious fear. In fact, they seem to have been directed, not against the ghost of the dead, the *aphangak*, as might have been supposed, but against the evil spirits called *kilyikhama*, to whom the Lenguas ascribe any fatal disease. The evil spirit is naturally believed to be present in that part of the body, which is the seat of the trouble. The rites were no doubt attempts to expel him from the body. Similarly other burial and mourning customs of the Lenguas and of the Chaco Indians in general, the burning

of the house and the property of the deceased, the blackening of the face, the veiling of the head, etc., are evidently precautions against the same evil spirits, who are believed to look for fresh victims among the survivors.

The same discrimination between the soul of the deceased and the disease- and death-demon must be made in regard to the burial customs of other uncivilized peoples, although most ethnologists in describing them, have failed to draw attention to this fact.

Some peoples, the Bantu of Africa and the different tribes of the Finno-Ugrian stock, for instance, worship chiefly the spirits of the dead, especially the spirits of ancestors, regarding them as their gods. These ancestral spirits require to be praised, flattered and honoured with sacrifices, and, if neglected may resent and punish the tribe with drought, famine, sickness, etc. But if duly worshipped, their affection for their surviving relatives, and friends will endure: they often become the guardians and protectors of their descendants. Thus among the Zulu the head of each family is worshipped by his children: remembering his kindness to them while he was living, they say "He will still treat us in the same way now he is dead". [27] The Herero invoke the blessings of their deceased friends or relatives, praying for success against their enemies, an abundance of cattle, numerous wives, and prosperity in their undertakings. [28] The same may be said of the feelings of the Finno-Ugrian tribes for their dead ancestors. [29]

But if we study the burial rites of these two races, we find that an abject terror or fear is generally shown, not wholly in conformity with the alleged benevolent character of the dead father or headman as a guardian spirit of his family or tribe. For example, we hear of the Bantu in South Africa that "a native does not care to go near people who are dying: he flees in terror. . . . When a headman of importance dies, his body is never taken out through the door; a special hole is made in the wall. . . . In some tribes when a man is seen to be *in extremis* his knees are bent up to his chin, and a net is thrown over his body. He is covered with skins, which practically smother him. His body is then hurriedly taken out of a hole in the side of his hut, and a shallow grave is dug in haste, and the man buried—sometimes before he is actually dead. So terrified are the people at the approach of death

that undoubtedly they often bury people before they are dead." [30]

To understand such apparent contradictions one has to take into consideration that, in his funeral rites, uncivilized man is dealing with two kinds of spirits which, theoretically at any rate, must be distinguished: the soul of the deceased, and the evil spirit who caused the death of the relative and is also regarded as a source of danger to the survivors. As we have seen, fatal disease, according to primitive belief, is caused in most cases by an evil spirit which penetrated into the body of the patient. When the patient dies, this spirit remains in the dead body. But the spirit, having obtained possession of a person and caused his death, will at the same time seize his soul and change him into an evil spirit altogether, no matter what his character in life. In many cases, therefore, there is practically no difference between the spirit which caused the death and the spirit of the dead person. [31]

This belief naturally complicates the ideas of primitive peoples about the spirits of the departed. But it helps one to understand why persons who when alive were perhaps honoured and loved, after death are feared as evil spirits trying to inflict all sorts of harm upon their surviving relatives. The change is due to the spirit who has invaded the deceased. The more spiritual power a person had in life, the more, generally, he is feared after death, because the spirit takes possession of this power. This is the reason why old people and sorcerers are usually most feared after death as evil and revengeful beings. This belief may also explain why death as a rule enhances the power of the departed souls.

To what extent fear of death, *i.e.* fear of the death-spirit, dominates uncivilized man appears clearly, for instance, in the Indians at times when epidemics rage. As one member of the family or community after the other is carried off by the invisible but formidable enemies raging in the village, and against whom the art of the medicine-man is powerless, the fear of the survivors gradually develops into a state of panic. Finally, they see no other way of ridding themselves of the unwelcome guests except by destroying and burning the whole village and abandoning it, the dead bodies being left unburied and the sick ones without care. When leaving the place, the inhabitants usually block up the path along which they go

with sticks and tree branches "in order that the disease-spirit may not be able to follow in their footsteps." [32]

Many funeral rites and mourning customs must be explained from this fear of mysterious disease- and death-spirits which are vaguely identified with the soul of the departed. Many rites at burial are evidently inspired by the desire to keep the spirit shut up in the grave. Practices of this kind are so numerous among peoples at a low level of culture that it is needless to adduce instances. I mention only that, in an account given of the funeral customs of the Indians of Guatemala, "the coffin is spun round six times, so that the ghost shall be unable to find its way back to the world of the living." After burial, the Chaco Indians carefully fill up the grave, placing upon it a great number of big tree branches with long thorns to prevent the spirit from reappearing. [33] In the higher cultures, mounds and monumental stones serve the same purpose in some cases, namely, to prevent the death-spirit or the soul of the departed from rising from the grave.

The purification ceremonies with fire, water, etc., by which many peoples try to purify the house of death and the whole village from the dangerous taboo attaching to it, have been dealt with before. The property of the deceased, especially his clothes and the vessels from which he has eaten or drunk, is treated in the same way. Practices of this kind have frequently been misinterpreted by theoretical writers. The burning of the property of the deceased at the grave, the breaking of clay vessels, and so on, have been explained as acts by which these objects are sent to the other world with the departed for his use. In many cases their purpose is simply the destruction of objects polluted by the taboo of death. Consequently such rites must be distinguished from genuine grave offerings.

An interesting detail in connection with the latter is the "killing" of the objects which are laid in the grave; in the New World, for instance, it was customary to break clay vessels and then throw them into the grave, or to bore holes into them. [34] These customs are also practised in other parts of the world. The Ostyaks, for instance, are in the habit of "marking" in some way all objects to be deposited in the grave or coffin: knives and arrow-points are broken, a

score is made in the axe with a knife, a hole is bored in the bottom of the pot, wooden objects are chipped, a piece is cut off from clothes, the sledge is broken [35], etc. These practices evidently have some mystic object: in some cases the underlying idea may be that the souls of the objects are set free to follow their owners to the other world. In America, broken clay pots, thrown into the grave, served in many cases as amulets to protect the remains of the dead from evil spirits who were believed to do them harm. [36]

Mourning customs, generally observed for some time after the burial, can be distinguished from funeral rites. Their object, in primitive and barbarous cultures, is nearly always to protect the survivors against the contagion of death or the spirit of the deceased. The exaggerated weeping and wailing after a death, the custom practised by the mourners of blackening their faces or the whole body, to veil the head, to wear special tokens of sorrow, to fast, scourge, or mutilate the body in some way—all these and similar mourning customs have sprung fundamentally from fear of death, or fear of the spirit of the dead. Although primitive peoples are no doubt capable of feeling real sorrow at the death of a near relative, on the other hand it is quite clear that such exaggerated manifestations cannot be genuine and spontaneous expressions of sorrow and pain, but have primarily a ceremonial character.

The loud wailing, for instance, is evidently at bottom due to superstitious fear; its object is simply to frighten away the spirit, which primitive peoples also try to keep at a distance by shouting and making as much noise as possible. [37] When mourners tear their clothes asunder, crawl in the dust, strew ashes upon their head, cut the hair and the beard, etc., as was customary for instance among the Israelites, such customs may be due to different ideas among different peoples, but the chief motives seem to be the same everywhere. By disfiguring his appearance the mourner may be trying to make himself unrecognizable to the spirit; by weeping and wailing, by tearing his clothes, and crawling in the dust he may be trying to awaken his compassion and avert his anger. Most mourning customs, however, are purification ceremonies by which the survivors try to neutralize the contagion of death and to prevent the malevolent disease-demon from seeking more victims among the surviving relatives. This is specially true of the mourning

customs called ceremonial mutilations, among which we may include such practices as hair-cutting, bleeding, lashing, and the scarification and cutting of limbs.

We hear of some Australian aborigines that they show their sorrow after the death of a relative by striking their heads with boomerangs so that the blood flows down over the body of the dead. [38] The Indians of North-western America and the Charruas in South America were in the habit of cutting finger-joints as a token of sorrow on the death of a relative. [39] The Arawaks of Guiana are famed for the peculiar mourning rite called *maricarri*, in which the mourners lash one another with whips until the blood flows in streams. [40] Such peculiar rites have sometimes been explained as forms of self-torture, designed to appease the revengeful spirit of the dead [41], sometimes as a kind of self-sacrifice whereby a part of the worshipper's own body is offered as a *paris pro toto* sacrifice representing the whole man. [42]

Neither of these explanations however is correct. In sanguinary practices such as those just mentioned we have obviously rites of purificatory significance by which mourners try to rid themselves from, or protect themselves against, the dangerous pollution of death. With the flowing blood, impure and harmful spirits are supposed to leave the organism, and lashing is a means of exorcising them. [43] The custom of shaving the head as a sign of sorrow is due to similar ideas. The hair is regarded as the seat of the soul or vital power. When widows cut their hair after the death of their husband, they rid themselves of a critical part of the body through which the dangerous death-spirit may acquire power over them. The strange practice of cutting the finger-joints as a sign of sorrow among the Charruas seems to have been due to the same considerations, but space forbids me to examine closely here these and other mourning customs.

The dangerous power of taboo which, according to primitive belief, is attached to the dead body, especially immediately after death, does not on the other hand prevent it from becoming the object of a real worship on the part of the survivors. On the contrary, as has already been pointed out, it is just this taboo of death which explains the increase of power noticeable in the human soul after its separation from the body. The souls of the departed, now released to a free and active existence, are

invested with supernatural powers which enable them to help or harm the survivors, their relation to the latter being essentially dependent on the homage paid to them. The worship of dead ancestors undoubtedly constitutes the most important form of primitive religion, being perhaps the one from which a religious cult in the proper sense of the word has sprung.



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### INTRODUCTION

1. F. Graebner, *Die Methode der Ethnologie*, p. 107. Rivers, "Survivals in Sociology," in *Sociological Review*, VI, 304.
2. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, 37.
3. Father W. Schmidt in several numbers of the *Anthropos*; for instance: "Die moderne Ethnologie" (*Anthropos*, I, 1906); "Die kultur-historische Methode in der Ethnologie" (*Anthropos*, VI, 1911); *Die Stellung der Pygmäenvölker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte des Menschen*, Stuttgart, 1910; "Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten in Südamerika," in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, XIV, 1913.
4. Rivers, "Sociology and Psychology," in *Sociological Review*, IX, 3, 10 sq.
5. Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*, I, 6.
6. Westermarck, *op. cit.*, I, 13.
7. This has been strongly emphasized by me in *The Civilization of the South American Indians* (Introduction, xxvi. and *passim*), where certain important culture elements of the Indians are treated of according to the comparative method.

### CHAPTER I

#### THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

1. Frazer, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, I, chapter iv.
2. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, 19.
3. Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, I, 384. *Ecclesiastical Institutions*, 17.
4. Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, I, 345, 346, 359.
5. Tylor, *op. cit.*, I, 385 sq.

### CHAPTER II

#### PSYCHOLOGY OF PRIMITIVE MAN. "PRE-ANIMISTIC" THEORY

1. Lévy-Bruhl, *Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, especially chapter ii. *Idem*, *Mentalité primitive*, *passim*.
2. *Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, p. 77.
3. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Central-Brasiliens*, 511, 512.
4. Darwin, *Descent of Man*, i., 67.
5. Romanes, *Mental Evolution in Animals*, 156 *sqq.*
6. Wundt, *Vorlesungen über die Menschen- und Tierseele*, 268. That all ideas of physical causality, of change, force, etc., are of psychical origin, *i.e.* are derived from man's direct consciousness of his own acts as causal agencies, is maintained by Sully (*The Human Mind*, I, 445). The same opinion is shared by Stout: . . . "the only source from which the material for these ideas of force, enforcement, etc., springs, is in our own mental life" (*Analytic Psychology*, i., 178; *cp.* II, 259).
7. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, 118.

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8. Holmberg, *Gudstrons uppkomst*, 7, 8, 9.
9. Söderblom, *Gudstrons uppkomst*, 254 sqq., 265 sqq.
10. Preuss, *Der Ursprung der Religion und Kunst*, in *Globus*, Bd. LXXXVI and LXXXVII, 1904, 1905.
11. Preuss, *Glauben und Mystik im Schatten des höchsten Wesens*, *passim*.
12. Clodd, *Magic in Names and in Other Things*, p. 3 (quoting Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*).
13. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, Preface, x.
14. See Söderblom's polemics against Durkheim in *Gudstrons uppkomst*, 22.
15. Marett, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
16. Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, p. 119.
17. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, p. 381.
18. Marett, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
19. Bove, *Patagonia, Terra del Fuoco, Mari Australi*, i., p. 139. D. Lovisato, "Appunti etnografici con accenni geologici sulla Terra del Fuoco," in *Cosmos*, 8, 1884-85, p. 149.
20. Th. Bridges in *Bulletin de la Société Anthropologique*, Paris, 1884, p. 181. Hyades, *Mission scientifique du Cap Horn*, VII, Paris, 1884, p. 255.
21. Marett, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
22. Karsten, *Civilization of the South American Indians*, p. 472.
23. Koch-Grünberg, *Vom Roraima zum Orinoco*, III, pp. 207 sqq.
24. Grubb, *An Unknown People in an Unknown Land*, p. 153.
25. Stadling, *Shamanismen i norra Asien*, p. 11.
26. Holmberg, *Die Wassergottheiten der Finnisch-Ugrischen Völker*, pp. 111 sqq.
27. Holmberg, *Gudstrons uppkomst*, p. 75.
28. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 76. *Idem*, *Die Wassergottheiten*, pp. 115 sqq.
29. Preuss, *Der Ursprung der Religion und Kunst*, in *Globus*, Bd. LXXXVI, p. 375.
30. von den Steinen, *op. cit.*, pp. 491 sqq.
31. How historians of religion are—perhaps unconsciously—influenced by their own theories in interpreting ethnological facts appears in a characteristic way from Marett's and Söderblom's works referred to above. The "animatistic" interpretation which Söderblom in his book on the origin of religion gives of the Australian *churinga*, having earlier rightly pointed out its intimate connection with the animism of the natives, will afford a further instance of this tendency. It is obvious that "analyses" of primitive conceptions founded on so subjective views carry little weight.
32. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 118.
33. Hocart, "Religion," *Mana*, in *Man*, vol. xiv., 1914, No. 46.
34. Hewitt, "Orenda and a Definition of Religion," in *American Anthropologist*, New Series, vol. iv., 1902, pp. 38 sq.
35. Still it seems to appear, from the descriptions given by Francis Parkman, Schoolcraft, the Jesuit Charlevoix, and others, that the *manitoo* was a general term including most of the spirits of nature in which the Algonkins believed. But particularly the *manitoo* was an individual guardian spirit acquired by fasting and dreaming. See Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, III, 372 sqq., and the authorities quoted by him.
36. Krohn, *Suomalaisen runojen uskonto*, pp. 65, 66, 74.
37. Westermarck, "Introductory Note" to Karsten, *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, p. xi.

38. *Aláh* was the strongest and *kelálah* the mildest form of curse which the Israelites knew. *Aláh*, which is mentioned for instance in Deuteronomy xxi. 22 and 23, in *Jesaiyah* xxiv. 6, and in *Jeremiah* xxiii. 10, was so strong that it had a destructive influence upon the very nature. But both these curses as well as the blessing (*berakáh*) among the Israelites were conceived as physical forces acting mechanically, which had no connection whatever with spirits or souls.
39. Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, I, 556 sq.
40. Karsten, "Kvarlevor av hednisk folktro bland Finlands svenskar," in *Hembygden*, No. 4, 1910, p. 51.
41. Karsten, *op. cit.*, No. 5, 1910, p. 70.
42. Karsten, *op. cit.*, No. 5, p. 69.
43. Nilsson, *Primitive Religion*, p. 19.
44. Wundt, *Völkerpsychologie*, Bd. VI. *Mythus und Religion*, p. 33.

### CHAPTER III

#### PRIMITIVE CONCEPTION OF THE SOUL

1. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 387.
2. Warneck, *The Living Christ and Dying Heathenism*, quoted by Chapman, "Tinneh Animism," in *The American Anthropologist*, 1921, pp. 298 sqq.
3. Kruijt, *Het animisme in den Indischen Archipel*, pp. 130, 132 and *passim*. Nieuwenhuis, *Die Veranlagung der malaiischen Völker des ost-indischen Archipels* (*Intern. Archiv für Ethnographie*, Bd. XII (1914), pp. 133 sq).
4. Wundt, *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie*, pp. 82, 204 sqq.
5. Nieuwenhuis, *Die Wurzeln des Animismus* (*Intern. Archiv für Ethnographie*, Bd. XXIV, 1917, pp. 36 sq).
6. Kruijt, *op. cit.*, *passim*. Warneck, *Die Religion der Batak*, p. 11. Nieuwenhuis, *Die Veranlagung der malaiischen Völker* (*op. cit.*), p. 131.
7. The word *néphesh* occurs in the Old Testament several hundred times and evidently was the most primitive notion of the soul among the ancient Israelites. That the original idea was the one which identifies the soul with the blood, and that the idea according to which *néphesh* has its *seat in the blood* was developed later, is most probable. The word *neshámah* again, which is used comparatively seldom in the Old Testament, evidently represents a still later idea and has reference to what is now called the "breath-soul." My attention has been called to these distinctions by Mr. I. Schur at Helsingfors, who has kindly put his manuscript on the animism in the Old Testament at my disposal.
8. Rohde, *Psyche, Seelenkultus und Unsterblichkeitsglaube bei den Griechen*, 45 sq., II, 142.
9. Callaway, *Religion of the Amazulu*, pp. 91, 126. Cp. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, II, 362.
10. Martius, *Beiträge zur Ethnographie Amerikas*, I, p. 705; II, p. 310. Cp. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 388. Clodd, *Magic in Names*, pp. 27, 32.
11. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, 189. Idem, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, p. 372.
12. Frazer, *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, pp. 319 sqq. Clodd, *op. cit.*, pp. 224 sqq. Karsten, *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 204 sq.

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13. Kingsley, *West African Studies*, p. 170.
14. Steindorff, "Die Ka und die Grabstatuen," in *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprach- und Altertumskunde*, Bd. XLVIII, pp. 152 sqq. Idem, *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 52, 77.
15. Paasonen, "Über die ursprünglichen Seelenvorstellungen bei den finnisch-ugrischen Völkern und die Benennungen der Seele in ihren Sprachen," in *Suomalais-Ugrilaisen Seuran Aikakauskirja*, XXV, 1908, pp. 2 sqq., Holmberg, *Permaalaisten uskonto*, p. 16 (on the Wotyaks and the Syrjanes). Idem, *Die Religion der Tsheremissen*, p. 13 sqq. (on the Tsheremisses).
16. See my *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 444 sqq., where the interesting ideas which the Jibaros entertain about dreams are related.
17. Karsten, *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 32, 249, note 3.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE SOUL AND MAGICAL "POWER"

1. See the full account of the "man-god" among primitive peoples given by Frazer in *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, pp. 244 sq., and 374 sq.
2. Haddon, *Head-Hunters, Black, White, and Brown*, *passim*. Warneck, *The Living Christ and Dying Heathenism*, quoted by Chapman in "Tinneh Animism" (*The American Anthropologist*, 1921, p. 298).
3. Mjöberg, *Huvudjägarnas land* Borneo, p. 380.
4. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 365 sq., and *passim*.
5. Karsten, *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, p. 407.
6. Clodd, *Magic in Names*, p. 20.
7. The most detailed general account of the notion of taboo in the lower religions is probably the one given by J. G. Frazer in *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*. As to accounts limited to certain parts of the world, I only mentioned those given by Spencer and Gillen with special reference to the Australians, by Junod with reference to the South African Bantu (in *The Life of a South African Tribe*), and by myself with reference to the South American Indians (in *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, chapter xv., "The Conception of Taboo").
8. 2 Sam. vi. 6 and 7.
9. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 475 sq.
10. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, pp. 192, 196.
11. Karsten, *Civilization*, pp. 474 sqq.
12. Krohn, *Suomalaisen runojen uskonto*, pp. 42, 66.
13. Kaudern, *Pd Madagaskar*, pp. 275 sq.
14. Kaudern, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
15. See for instance James Teit, *The Lillooet Indians*, p. 290. Boas, "Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl," in *Sixth Report of the Committee on the North-Western Tribes of Canada (Report of the British Association)*, pp. 435 sq. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 216, 429.
16. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 226, 429.
17. Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 128, 368. Strehlow, *Die Aranda- und Loritja-Stämme in Zentral-Australien*, p. 78.

18. Strehlow, *op. cit.*, pp. 76, 78, etc.
19. Söderblom, *Gudströns uppkomst*, pp. 42, 48, etc.
20. Söderblom, "Mystericeremonier och deras ursprung," in *Ymer*, 1906, pp. 202 sq.
21. Karsten, *Civilization*, p. 481.
22. Strehlow, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
23. Söderblom, *Gudströns uppkomst*, p. 39.
24. Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 111, 144.
25. Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Peru*, pp. 25 sq.
26. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 49 sq.

## CHAPTER V

## THE WORSHIP OF ANIMALS

1. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, p. 23.
2. Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, II, p. 596. Castrén, *Nordiska resor och forskningar*, III, p. 192.
3. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, I, *passim*.
4. Landtman, *The Kiwai Papuans of British New Guinea*, p. 441. Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, p. 295.
5. Frazer, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 290 sq. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 52.
6. Hose, "The Natives of Borneo," in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XXIII (1894), p. 165. Nieuwenhuis, *In Central Borneo*, I, p. 148.
7. Nieuwenhuis, *Die Wurzeln des Animismus*, p. 39.
8. Helderma, "De tijger en het bijgeloof der Bataks," in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- en Volkenkunde*, XXXIV (1891), pp. 170-175.
9. Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 85, 86, 87. Cp. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, II, pp. 333 sqq.
10. Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 615.
11. Father Abinal, "Croyances fabuleuses des Malgaches," in *Les Missions Catholiques*, XII (1880), pp. 549-551.
12. Halkin, *Quelques Peuplades du district de l'Uélé*, p. 102.
13. Ambrosetti, "La legenda del yaguarete-aba (El Indio tigre)," in *Anales de la Sociedad científica Argentina*, Tomo XLI (1896), pp. 321 sqq.
14. Karsten *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 267 sqq. (where the ideas of the South American Indians about the jaguar are treated of).
15. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 376 sq.
16. Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
17. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 377 sq.
18. Karsten, *Civilization*, pp. 294 sq.
19. Im Thurn, *Among the Indians of British Guiana*, pp. 332 sq.
20. Holmberg, *Permaalaisten uskonto*, p. 16.
21. Holmberg, *Lappalaisten uskonto*, p. 94.
22. Krohn, "Lappische Beiträge zur germanischen Mythologie," in *Finnischugrische Forschungen*, 1906, p. 156.
23. Karjalainen, *Jugralaisten uskonto*, pp. 408 sq.
24. Karjalainen, *op. cit.*, p. 414.
25. Karjalainen, *op. cit.*, pp. 394, 395, 399, 411, 412.
26. Karsten, *Civilization*, p. 278.
27. Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee* (*Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of the American Ethnology*, I), pp. 281 sqq.

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29. Holmberg, *Permaläisten uskonto*, p. 156.
30. Jochelson, *The Koryaks*, pp. 88 sq.
31. Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, VIII, 1. 4 and 36 ; 2. 77.
32. Whiffen, *The North-West Amazons*, p. 225.
33. Plato, *Leges*, IX, 873.
34. Plin., *Hist. nat.*, VIII, 28, 29, 42, 43.
35. Alian, *De nat. anim.*, XII, 40.
36. Alian, *op. cit.*, XII, 40.
37. de Block, "Le loup dans les mythologies de la Grèce et de l'Italie anciennes," in *Revue de l'instruction publique en Belgique*, tome 20 (1877), pp. 217 sqq.
38. Karsten, *Studies in Primitive Greek Religion*, pp. 21 sq.
39. Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
40. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 sq. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, chapter i., "The Diasia," pp. 326 sqq.
41. Alian, *De nat. anim.*, XII, 34.
42. Karsten, *op. cit.*, 23 sq.
43. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, pp. 125, 126.
44. Jevons, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
45. Bandelier, *The Islands of Titicaca and Koati*, p. 104.
46. Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE WORSHIP OF PLANTS

1. Boas, in *Sixth Report of the Committee on the North-Western Tribes of Canada (Report of the British Association)*, Leeds, 1890, p. 580.
2. Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, p. 421.
3. Boas, in *Fifth Report of the Committee on the North-Western Tribes of Canada (Report of the British Association)*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1889, p. 849.
4. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois*, pp. 162, 164.
5. Karsten, *Civilization*, 304 sqq.
6. Preuss, *Religion und Mythologie der Uitoto*, I, p. 38.
7. Koch-Grünberg, *Vom Roraima zum Orinoco*, Bd. II. *Mythen und Legenden der Taulipang- und Areakuna-Indianer*, pp. 20, 21.
8. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 49 sqq. Idem, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, pp. 34 sqq.
9. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, II, 832. Cp. Lindblom, *The Akamba*, p. 240.
10. Mjöberg, *Huvudjägarnas Land*, pp. 342 sq. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 194, 212 sq. Nieuwenhuis, *Die Veranlagung der malaiischen Völker*, p. 135.
11. Gason, "The Dieryerie Tribe," in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 280. Howitt, "The Dieri and other kindred Tribes of Central Australia," in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XX (1891), p. 89.
12. Gardner, "Philippine (Tagalog) Superstitions," in *Journal of American Folk-lore*, XIX (1906), p. 191.

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  14. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
  15. Holmberg, *Die Religion der Tsheremissen*, p. 57.
  16. See Frazer, *The Magic Art*, II, pp. 7 sqq. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*.
  17. Evans, "Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult," in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1901, pp. 101-104.
  18. Pliny, *Historia naturalis*, XII, 1, 2.
  19. Hymn. Hom. *Aphrod.*, 264.
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  23. Pliny, *op. cit.*, XVI, 46.
  24. Aeschylus, *Prom.*, 830. Sophocles, *Trach.*, 1169 and Schol. Hesiod., *Fragm.*, 134, 8. Cp. Hom., *Od.*, XIV, 327. Soph., *Trach.*, 171. Verg., *Georgica*, II, 291. Pliny, *Hist. nat.*, XVI, 55.
  25. Plut., *Theseus*, c. 8.
  26. Karsten, *Studies in Primitive Greek Religion*, p. 19.
  27. Aeneas Sylvius, *Opera*, p. 418.
  28. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 186.
  29. Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, pp. 295 sq.
  30. Dalton, *op. cit.*, p. 188.
  31. Labat, *Voyage du chevalier des Marchais en Guinée*, I, 338.
  32. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*, II, 102, 106.
  33. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 161, 190 sq. Meyer, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schlesien*, p. 397.
  34. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, pp. 190 sqq. Idem, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, pp. 212 sqq.
  35. Nilsson, *Årets folkliga fester*, p. 30.
  36. Karsten, *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 427 sqq.
  37. Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, p. 423.
  38. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Central-Brasiliens*, p. 493.
  39. Preuss, *Religion und Mythologie der Uitóto*, p. 132.
  40. On these ideas, see more fully my *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 132 sqq.
  41. See Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la idolatria del Peru*, p. 16. Cp. Villagomez, *Carta pastoral de exortacion e instrucion*, fol. 40, § 23. Mannhardt, *Mythologische Forschungen*, pp. 343 sq.
  42. Nieuwenhuis, *Die Wurzeln des Animismus*, p. 39. A full account of the ceremonies observed by the Malays at sowing, planting, and reaping the rice is given by Skeat in *Malay Magic*, pp. 221-249.
  43. Mannhardt, *op. cit.* Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, vol. i.
  44. See for instance Nilsson, *Primitiv Religion*, pp. 15, 65, etc., and Idem, *Årets folkliga fester*, p. 58. In the former work especially, the author, led by his "preamimistic" bias, gives an erroneous explanation of several primitive rites of the Indo-Europeans and Teutons, still surviving in German countries.
- A curious attempt wholly to reason away the Indo-European fertility demons has recently been made by another Swedish student of folk-lore, Dr. C. W. v. Sydow, who tries to show that Mannhardt, in making his statements about these fertility demons, the "last sheaf," etc., had been led astray by Tylor's theory of animism. See his article on "The Mannhardtian theories about the last sheaf and the fertility demons," in *Folk-Lore*, XLV (1934), N. IV, pp. 291 sqq.

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45. Nilsson, *Årets folkliga fester*, p. 57.
46. From a pharmacological point of view, on the other hand, Dr. L. Lewin has given a very interesting account of both the Polynesian *kava* and of several other narcotic drinks of savage peoples. See his *Phantastica, Narcotic and Stimulating Drugs*, pp. 215 sqq.
47. Preuss, *Über den Ursprung der Religion und Kunst in Globus*, Bd. LXXXVII (1905), p. 418.
48. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, pp. 125 sq.
49. Karsten, *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 315 sq. Idem, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 327 sqq. and *passim*.
50. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters*, pp. 441 sqq.
51. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 432, 447, etc.
52. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 151 sq., 154, etc.
53. Mjöberg, *Huvudjägarnas land Borneo*, p. 468.
54. Koch-Grünberg, *Vom Roraima zum Orinoco*, Bd. III; *Ethnographie*, pp. 210 sq.

## CHAPTER VII

## THE WORSHIP OF INANIMATE NATURE

1. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, pp. 19 sq.
2. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 118.
3. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 127 sq.
4. Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 383.
5. Karsten, *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 363 sq.
6. I am indebted to Mr. H. Grönroos, B.A., at Helsingfors, for information about the early literature on West African fetishism here quoted.
7. *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battel*. Pinkerton, *Collection of Voyages*, XVI, p. 333.
8. Marees, *Description et recit historical du riche royaume d'or de Gunea*, p. 27.
9. Dapper, *Beschreibung von Afrika*, p. 494. Dapper was a medical man who was much interested in history and geography. He did not travel himself, but he knew well the literature on West Africa.
10. Bosman, *Voyage de Guinée*, pp. 150, 158. Loyer, *Relation de voyage du royaume d'Issyny, Côte d'Or*, p. 243: "Everything good comes from the fetishes, and they also work everything evil." Loyer was a French missionary who lived in West Africa between 1700 and 1703. Cp. also Römer, *Tillforladelig Efterretning om Kysten Guinea*, pp. 2-4. Chapter iii. of the book deals with the religion of the negroes in general. Römer was a Danish merchant who lived in West Africa for many years from 1739.
11. Thus to Miss Kingsley fetishism was identical with the primitive religion of the negroes in general. See *West African Studies*, p. 113.
12. Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism*, p. 68.
13. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 192.
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See also Karsten, *Studies in Primitive Greek Religion*, 10 sq.

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23. Aristotle, *De rep. Athn.*, c. 57. Pausanias, *op. cit.*, I, 28, 10.
24. Karsten, *Civilization*, 344 sqq.
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27. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 331 sqq.
28. Sahagun, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, pp. 35-37, 159.
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33. Holmberg, *Die Wassergottheiten der finnisch-ugrischen Völker*, pp. 267 sq., 271, etc.
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45. See the Gospel of St. John, chapter v.
46. Finlands svenska folkdiktning, VII. *Folktro och trolldom*, pp. 10, 758 sqq.
47. See Holmberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 191 sqq.
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51. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 359, 360, 362.
52. Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 360.
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54. Virgil, *Aen.*, I, 52.
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57. Herod, VII, 178. Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, VI, 3.
58. Frazer, *The Worship of Nature*, I, 441 sqq.
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60. Gallardo, *Los Onas*, 338.
61. Koch-Grünberg, *Vom Roraima zum Orinoco*, II; *Mythen und Legenden der Taulipang- und Arekuna-Indianer*, p. 12. Grubb, *An Unknown People in an Unknown Land*, p. 139. Falkner, *Description of Patagonia*, p. 113.

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65. See Schefferus, *Lapponia*, p. 58. Leem, *Beskrivelse over Finnmarkens Lapper*, p. 411. Jessen, *Afhandling om de norske Finners og Lappers hedenske Religion*, p. 19.
66. Holmberg, *Permalaisen uskonto*, pp. 167 sq., 172. Idem, *Die Religion der Tsheremissen*, pp. 68 sq.
67. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 53.
68. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 87.
69. See *Finlands svenska folkdiktning*, VII. *Folktro och trolldom*, pp. 285 sq.; XVI, p. 332 sqq.; XVII, 353 sqq., etc. The Finns called these local spirits, inhabiting not only dwelling-houses and other objects made by human hand, but also mountains, lakes, rivers, etc., *haltia*, a word that exactly answers to the Swedish *riddaren* or *tomten*. See Lencqvist, *De superstitione veterum fennorum* (Porthan, *Opera selecta*, IV, 76). As to the animistic origin of these beings, see Holmberg, *Wassergottheiten*, p. 225 and *passim*.
70. Bandelier, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
71. Cushing, *A Study of Pueblo Pottery* (*Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*), pp. 510 sq.
72. Karsten, *Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, p. 446. See also Idem, *Civilization*, pp. 244 sqq.

## CHAPTER VIII

## TOTEMISM

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2. Donner, *Sibirien*, pp. 235 sq.
3. Karjalainen, *op. cit.*, pp. 411 sq., 414.
4. v. Strahlenberg, *Der Nord- und Östliche Theil von Europa und Asia*, p. 378.
5. See the authorities quoted by Holmberg, *The Shaman Costume and its Significance*, pp. 25 sq.
6. Khangalov, quoted by Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
7. Sternberg, *Sbornik Muz. Antrop. i Ethnog. pri akad. Nauk.* III, 167.
8. Agapitov and Khangalov, quoted by Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
9. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 26 sq.
10. Holmberg, *loc. cit.*
11. Potanin, *Otcherki*, II, 161-162, 164-165.
12. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Centra-Brasiliens*, pp. 491-493.
13. Martius, *Beiträge zur Ethnographie Südamerikas*, I., 303.
14. Spix and Martius, *Reise in Brasilien*, III, 1236.
15. Spix and Martius, *op. cit.*, III, 1208.
16. Gumiilla, *Histoire naturelle, civile et géographique de l'Orénoque*, I, 174-178.
17. Wallace, *Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro*, p. 334.
18. Simons, "An Exploration of the Goajiro Peninsula," in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, New Series, VII, 789 sq.

19. Bolinder, *Indianer och tre vita*, p. 70.
20. Im Thurn, *Among the Indians of British Guiana*, pp. 176 sqq.
21. Im Thurn, *op. cit.*, pp. 184 sq.
22. Falkner, *A Description of Patagonia*, p. 114.
23. Rosales, *Historia General del Reyno de Chile*, I, 166.
24. Coudreau, *La France équinoxiale*, II, 346.
25. Roth, *Animism and Folklore of the Guiana Indians*, pp. 145 sq.
26. Roth, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
27. Garcilasso de la Vega, *Comentarios reales*, bk. I, cc. 10, 18.
28. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, IV, 60 sq.
29. Holmberg, *Über die Völker des russischen Amerika (Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennica)*, pp. 318, 319, 345. Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs, and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians (Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology)*, p. 429.
30. Swanton, *Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida*, pp. 117 sq. Petitot, *Monographie des Déné-Dindjé*, p. 59.
31. See my *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 422 sqq.
32. See Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 424 sq., and the whole chapter on "Generation and Conception," pp. 414 sqq.
33. Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 127. Cp. *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 150.
34. Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes*, pp. 123 sqq.
35. Boas in *Fifth Report of the Committee on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, pp. 23-25.
36. Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," in *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, pp. 229, 233.
37. Frazer, *op. cit.*, III, 104.

## CHAPTER IX.

## SPIRITS, DEMONS, GHOSTS

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2. Fraser, *Aborigines of New South Wales*, p. 78.
3. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 85.
4. Powdemaker, *Oceania*, I, 363.
5. Ellis, *Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 13.
6. Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History of East Tennessee*, pp. 267 sq.
7. Lichtenstein, quoted by Avebury in *Origin of Civilization*, p. 281.
8. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, pp. 393 sq.
9. Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 396.
10. Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 385. Idem, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, p. 198.
11. Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 548 (note), 531, 537.
12. Landtman, *The Kitwai Paupans of British New Guinea*, pp. 220, 225, 282, 322.
13. Mjöberg, *Huvudjägarnas land Borneo*, p. 437. Camerling, *Über Ahnenkult in Hinterindien*, pp. 134, 135, 160, 161. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 322 sqq., 410 sqq., etc.
14. Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 135, 137, 138, 168 sq. Cp. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, II, 473, 504 sqq.
15. Lindblom, *The Akamba*, p. 269 and note.

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16. See Fritzner, *Lappernes hedenskap og troldomskunst*, and Qvigstad, *Kildeskrifter til den lappiske mythologi*, I, containing the so-called Närö manuscript written by Johan Randulf, who among other things gives an interesting drawing of a miniature bow and arrow used by the Lappish wizards. See also Holmberg, *Lappalaisten uskonto*, p. 109.
17. See Karsten, *Civilization of the South American Indians*, p. 160.
18. Holmberg, *Die Religion der Tsheremissen*, p. 195.
19. See Stadling, *Shamanismen i norra Asien*, pp. 83, 93, 106, etc. Donner, *Sibirien*, p. 229. Bogoras, *The Chuckchee*, in *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, XI (1909), 463 sq.
20. Donner, *Ethnological Notes about the Yenisey-Ostyak*, p. 75.
21. Stadling, *op. cit.*, pp. 99 sq.
22. Donner, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
23. Castrén, *Finsk mytologi*, pp. 121 sq. Varonen, *Vainajainpalvelus muinaisilla suomalaisilla*, pp. 16, 23.
24. Karjalainen, *Jugralaisten uskonto*, pp. 49, 50, 51, 57.
25. Plato, in his *Phaedros*, discusses the nature of madness in detail and distinguishes two main kinds: one produced by human infirmity, and the other called "divine madness," due to "divine transformation of the usual conditions" (*Phaedros*, p. 265). Cp. also Plato, *Menon*, p. 99; *Ion*, p. 534.
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27. Aretæus Cappad., *De morbo chron.*, I, 4.
28. Frazer, *The Scapegoat*, p. 73.
29. Im Thurn, *The Indians of British Guiana*, p. 367.
30. Spix and Martius, *Reise in Brasilien*, I, 379.
31. See, for instance, Ellis, *Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, pp. 12, 70. Kingsley, *West African Studies*, p. 159. Idem, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 443.
32. Varonen, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
33. Plato, *Leges*, 800 D.
34. Lysias contra Cines., *Fragm.* 31. See also Karsten, *Studies in Primitive Greek Religion*, p. 90.
35. Livy, XXII, 10. See also Burriess, *Taboo, Magic, Spirits*, pp. 80, 82, 83.
36. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, III, 727 sq. Justinus, *Apologia prima*, c. 14; *Apologia secunda*, c. 5. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, VIII, cc. 51-57. Tertullian, *Apologeticum*, c. 22.

## CHAPTER X

## "SUPREME BEINGS" OF PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

1. Andrew Lang, *The Making of Religion*, Preface to third Edition, p. xiii.
2. This has been stated even by so moderate a critic as the Swedish Archbishop Söderblom in *Gudströns uppkomst*, p. 149. See also Pettazzoni, "Allwissende höchste Wesen bei primitivsten Völkern, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, XXIX, Heft 3/4, passim.
3. Pettazzoni, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni*, Vol. VII (1931).
4. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 506.
5. Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 491 sq.
6. Pettazzoni, *L'Essere celesti nelle credenze di popoli primitivi*, 1922. Idem, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni*, Vol. VII, 1931, p. 6.
7. Pettazzoni, "Allwissende höchste Wesen," *op. cit.*, p. 109, etc.

8. Brown, *The Andaman Islanders*, p. 153.
9. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
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12. Söderblom, *op. cit.*, p. 167.
13. Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, p. 246.
14. Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 538.
15. Howitt in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XIV, 321.
16. Langloh Parker, *Euahlayi Tribe*, pp. 8, 9, 79, 89.
17. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 507.
18. Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 553. Matthews, in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, XXIV, 416; XXV, 298.
19. Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, chapter viii., and p. 495.
20. Wallace, *A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and the Rio Negro*, pp. 296 *sqq.*
21. Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, II, 167.
22. Bosman, *Voyage de Guinée*, p. 148: "Ils n'ont pas cette croyance imparfaite d'eux-mêmes, ni ils ne l'ont pas recue par tradition de leurs ancêtres, mais uniquement par leur frequentation avec les Européens, qui ont taché de là à eux imprimer peu à peu."
23. *The History and Description of Africa, written by a Moor known as Leo Africanus*. Edited by Robert Brown, vol. III, 1002.
24. Man, *On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands*, 1883.
25. A. R. Brown, in *Folk-Lore*, XX (1909), pp. 258-271.
26. Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information respecting . . . the Indian Tribes of the United States*, I, 35.
27. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois*, p. 172.
28. Dorsey, "A Study of Siouan Cults," in *Annual Rep. of Bur. Ethnol.*, XI (1894), 365 *sq.*, 366. Cp. M'Gee, "The Siouan Indians," in *Annual Rep. of Bur. Ethnol.*, XV (1897), 181 *sqq.*
29. Preuss, *Religion und Mythologie der Uitoto*, p. 29.
30. Karsten, *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 299, 301 *sq.*
31. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, p. 125 *sq.* and *passim*.
32. See Koppers, *Unter Feuerland-Indianern*, p. 5: "Die interessanteste und bedeutsamste Sensation im Bereiche der neuzeitlichen vergleichenden Religionsforschung."
33. See Koppers, *Unter Feuerland-Indianern*, pp. 2, 5, 18, etc. Gusinde, "Cuarto expedición a la Tierra del Fuego," in *Publicaciones del Museo de etnología y antropología de Chile*, Tomo IV, Nums. 1 y 2, pp. 26, 27, 33, 35, 42, etc.
34. Alberto M. de Agostini, *Zehn Jahre im Feuerland*, p. 263.
35. Agostini, *op. cit.*, p. 286. It is curious that whereas Father Agostini mentions the brothers Bridges as the only ones who have witnessed the ceremonies of the Klocketen, he does not mention Gusinde at all, although Father Agostini was in Terra del Fuego the last time in 1922-1923. Agostini's book on Terra del Fuego is published in 1924. His own view in regard to the Supreme Being of the Onas—founded on ten years of studies in Terra del Fuego—Father Agostini expresses in these words: "Die Ona haben keine eigentliche Religion im Sinne der Verehrung eines höchsten allmächtigen Wesens" (p. 291).
36. See Fahrenfort, *Het hoogste Wesen der Primitieven*, 1927, and Idem, *Wie der Urmonotheismus am Leben erhalten wird*, 1930.
37. Pettazzoni, "Allwissende höchste Wesen," *op. cit.*, p. 217.

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38. Frequent repetitions of the same things, long expositions of unessential matters—as if the chief concern of the author had been to write as voluminous a book as possible—a marked inclination for self-praise, and uncalled-for attacks against the “evolutionary school” are not likely to make Father Gusinde’s Selknam book or his other writings on the Fuegians a very grateful reading. Especially the accounts Father Gusinde gives of his journeys in Terra del Fuego in *Publicaciones del Museo de etnología y antropología*, Tomo IV. Nums. 1 and 2 are full of polemics against the “dilettantism” and “arbitrary methods” of the “evolutionary school,” which is contrasted with “the only really scientific ethnological school,” the culture-history school.
39. Bridges, “Manners and Customs of the Firelanders,” in *A Voice for South America*, vol. XIII, 211.
40. Koppers, *op. cit.*, pp. 151 sqq.
41. Koppers, *op. cit.*, pp. 150, 169. Fahrenfort, in his pamphlet *Wie der Urmonotheismus am Leben erhalten wird*, p. 60, points out the radical contradiction which there is between Gusinde’s account of the moral qualities of Watauinewa in Koppers’ book *Unter Feuerland-Indianern*, p. 169, and in a paper, “Zur Ethik der Feuerlander,” published in *Semaine d’ethnologie religieuse*, 1925, p. 163.
42. Pettazzoni, *op. cit.*, pp. 216 sqq.
43. Koppers, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
44. Pettazzoni, *op. cit.*, p. 214.
45. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, p. 448.
46. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, p. 129.
47. Karsten, *Indian Tribes*, p. 110.
48. Pettazzoni, “Monotheismus und Polytheismus,” in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bd. IV.
49. Söderblom, *Gudströne uppkomst*, p. 175.
50. Preuss, *Glauben und Mystik im Schatten des höchsten Wesens*, *passim*.
51. Grieve, *History of Kamtschatka*, p. 203. Steller, *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, p. 253.
52. Karsten, *Indian Tribes*, pp. 110, 206.

## CHAPTER XI

## THE ORIGIN OF RITUAL, MAGIC AND RELIGION

1. See Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, pp. 106, 109, 110, etc. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, p. 13.
2. See, for instance, Ling Roth, *Great Benin*, p. 49. Ellis, *Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast*, p. 26. Idem, *Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 36. Idem, *Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 33. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, pp. 505 sq.
3. See above, p. 133.
4. Oldfield, *Aborigines of Australia*, II, 229.
5. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, II, 584.
6. Landtman, *Origin of Priesthood*, *passim*.
7. Karjalainen, *Jugralaisten uskonto*, pp. 571, 572, 573.
8. See Buch, “Die Wotjäken,” *Acta Soc. Scient. Fenn.*, XII, 590–592. Pervuhin, *Jeskisi predani y buita inarodtsev Glasovskavo uyesda*, II, 10–19. Bogaevskij, *Otcherk buita Sarapulskihe Votyakov*, IV, 122–131. Even J. Krohn, in *Suomen suvun pakanallinen jumalanspalvelus*, pp. 99, 101, points out that among the Votyaks the sorcerer (*tuno*) originally did not perform the sacrifices.

9. See Znamenskij, *Gornie Tcheremisyi*, pp. 57-61, 66-71. Filimonov, *O religii nekretchenniyih Tcheremiss y Votyakov* (*Bjatsk. Gub. Bjedom.*), 1869, No. 25. See also Krohn, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 sqq., where the clear distinction between the *muzhan* and the priest, *kart*, is pointed out. The sacrificial priest, *kart*, among the Tsheremisses is of later origin and is a culture-loan from the Tartars.
10. Qvigstad, *Kildeskripter*, p. 39. Jessen, *De norske Finners och Lappers Hedenske Religion*, p. 50.
11. Stadling, *Shamanismen i norra Asien*, pp. 93 sqq.
12. Lindblom, *The Akamba*, p. 257.
13. In the Books of Samuel and those of the Kings there are indications as to the existence of real prophet schools in which young men, under the guidance of some old prophet, developed their natural aptitude for this profession. See, for instance, the first Book of Samuel x. 5-6 and 10-12. Cp. also the first of Kings i. 22.
14. Karsten, *Studies in Primitive Greek Religion*, p. 83. Stengel, *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer*, pp. 30 sqq.

## CHAPTER XII

### COMMUNION WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD

1. See more fully on this subject my *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 172 sq. and *passim*.
2. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 114 sq., 172, etc.
3. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, pp. 127 sqq.
4. Catlin, *Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, I, 35-37.
5. Sternberg, *Divine Election in Primitive Religion* (*Congres international des Americanistes*), XXI Session, Göteborg, 1925, pp. 472 sqq.
6. Sternberg, *op. cit.*, p. 474.
7. See Bogoras, *The Chuckchee*, p. 42.
8. Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism*, p. 53.
9. That for instance among the Finno-Ugrian peoples the earliest priest was the family father himself, is quite evident. From the family cult the official cult of the community had been developed among them.
10. Oldenberg, *Religion des Veda*, pp. 394 sqq.
11. Lehmann, *Zarathustra*, p. 229.
12. Erman, *Agypten und altägyptisches Leben*, pp. 394 sq., 377 sqq.
13. Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 656 sqq.
14. See my *Head-Hunters*, chapter on "Divination," p. 432, and my *Indian Tribes*, pp. 146 sqq.
15. See my *Head-Hunters*, chapter on "Divination." A most interesting study, from a physiological point of view, of these and other similar narcotics among the Indians and among other lower races has been made by Lewin in his book *Phantastica. Narcotic and Stimulating Drugs*, 1931.
16. Sahagun, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva Espana*, Book 10, chapter 7, § 1; chapter 29, § 2. See also Seler, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur amerikanischen Sprach- und Alterthumskunde*, III, 359.
17. Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen russischen Reichs*, I, 102. Donner, Sibirien, pp. 232 sq. See also Lewin, *op. cit.*, pp. 123 sqq.
18. Lewin, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

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19. Pliny, *Hist. nat.*, XXIV, 102. Hesych, s.v. "ωνήτρεισα." See also Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte*, II, 152.
20. Karsten, *Head-Hunters*, pp. 228 sq.
21. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 137 sq.
22. Karsten, *Civilization*, p. 475. Idem, *Indian Tribes*, pp. 176 sq.
23. On sexual taboos in general, see Crawley, *The Mystic Rose*, I, ch. iii.

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE CONTROL OF SPIRITS BY MAGICAL MEANS

1. See my *Civilization*, pp. 86 sqq., 114 sq.
2. Stadling, *Shamanismen*, pp. 74 sq. Holmberg, *The Shaman Costume and its Significance*, pp. 6 sqq., 9, 13, 14, etc. Donner, *Ethnological Notes*, p. 81.
3. This I have myself shown with special reference to the South American Indians in my *Civilization*, chapter i. "Ceremonial Body-painting."
4. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
5. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
6. Donner, *Sibirien*, p. 228.
7. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 30. Donner, *Ethnological Notes*, p. 81.
8. Boas, *Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians (Report of the United States National Museum for 1895)*, p. 435. Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, p. 421.
9. Koch-Grünberg, *Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern*, II, 293.
10. See my *Civilization*, chapter viii., on "The Origin of Ornamental Art," pp. 223 sqq.
11. Reuterskiöld, *De nordiska lapparnas religion*, p. 95. Idem, *Källskrifter till lapparnas mytologi*, p. 14.
12. Karsten, *op. cit.*, 211.
13. Lery, *Histoire d'un voyage fait en la terre du Brésil*, p. 274.
14. Donner, *Sibirien*, pp. 238 sq. Stadling, *op. cit.*, pp. 69 sq. Among the Siberian tribes the drum is looked upon as a living being, as the seat of a spirit. Some of them believe that the drum can speak and regard the drum-sticks as its tongue. Stadling, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
15. See my *Civilization*, pp. 270 sq., 286. *Head-Hunters*, pp. 375 sqq.
16. See my *Civilization*, pp. 18 sq.
17. See my *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, pp. 163 sq.
18. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 146 sq.
19. Nilsson, *Primitive Religion*, p. 142.
20. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 84 sq.
21. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 169 sq.
22. See my *Head-Hunters*, p. 431.
23. See, for instance, on South American masks, Koch-Grünberg, *Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern*, I, 132 sqq., II, 176 sqq.
24. See my *Civilization*, the chapters on the "Origin of Ornamental Art."
25. Catlin, *Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians*, I, 83, 127-129.
26. Catlin, *op. cit.*, I, 157 sq., 164 sqq.
27. Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs, and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians (Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology)*, pp. 435 sqq.
28. See my *Indian Tribes*, pp. 156, 157, 158, 160, etc.
29. *Op. cit.*, p. 161.

## CHAPTER XIV

## PURIFICATION CEREMONIES

1. See Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 88 *sqq.*
2. See Stengel, *Die Griechischen Kultusaltertümer*, pp. 138 *sqq.* Rohde, *Psyche*, I, 236 *sqq.* Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1908), pp. 32 *sqq.* Frazer, *The Scapegoat*, pp. 152 *sqq.*
3. Molina, *Relación de las fabulas e ritos de los Incas*, pp. 35-41. Cobo, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*, IV, 113 *sqq.*
4. See Frazer, *Balder the Beautiful*, I, 329, 331 *sqq.*, 341 *sqq.*
5. Cyprian, *Epistola*, 58, § 15. See also Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu*, pp. 132 *sqq.* Farnell, *op. cit.*, pp. 156 *sqq.*
6. Cyprian expresses this view in his *Epistola*, 58, § 2. As to Augustine, see his *De anima et ejus origine*, I, c. 9.
7. Herod. ii. 39.
8. Pausanias, *Descriptio Greciae*, II, 34, 3.
9. Lev. xvii. As to the feast of the day of Israelitic atonement and the scapegoat, new and interesting points of view have been adduced by J. Schur in his work, *Versöhnungstag und Sündenbock*, 1933.
10. See Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen im Altertum*, pp. 468 *sqq.*, 479 *sqq.* Nilsson, *Griechische Feste*, pp. 105, 111 *sqq.*
11. Servius, *Aen.* III, 57.
12. See Lehmann, *Zarathustra*, II, 71 *sqq.*, 181, 200 *sqq.*
13. King, *Babylonian Religion*, p. 212.
14. Bolinder, *Die Indianer der tropischen Schneegebirge*, pp. 139, 140.
15. Bolinder, *Ijca-indianernas kultur*, p. 230. A detailed study of confession in primitive religion has been made by Pettazzoni in *La Confessione dei Peccati*, vol. I (1929).
16. A full account of confession in ancient Peruvian religion, founded on the statements of ancient Spanish chroniclers, has been given by me in *The Civilization of the South American Indians* pp. 491 *sqq.*
17. See my *Civilization*, pp. 493 *sqq.*

## CHAPTER XV

## SACRIFICE

1. Gumilla, *El Orinoco ilustrado*, I, 160.
2. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, p. 173.
3. Ministerio de Fomento, *Tres relaciones de antigüedades Peruanas*, p. 141. See also my *Civilization*, p. 381.
4. Arriaga, *Extirpación de la idolatria*, p. 37. Forbes, *The Aymara Indians of Bolivia and Peru*, p. 45.
5. Stengel, *Griechische Kultusaltertümer*, p. 80 *sqq.* Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, 102. See also Harrison, *Prolegomena*, chapter i. "The Diasia," pp. 326 *sqq.*
6. This has been shown by me with particular reference to the South American Indians in *Civilization*, pp. 244, 245, note 3.
7. Bandelier, *The Islands of Titicaca and Koati*, p. 95.
8. Holmberg, *Gudströns uppkomst*, p. 89.
9. Holmberg, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
10. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, *passim*.
11. See my *Primitive Greek Religion*, pp. 42 *sqq.* Granger, *The Worship of the Romans*, p. 161.
12. Porphyry, *De antro nympharum*, 20.
13. Krohn, *Suomen suuren pakanallinen jumalanpalvelus*, pp. 46 *sqq.*

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14. Stengel, *op. cit.*, p. 18. Lehmann, *Zarathustra*, p. 230. See also Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde*, s.v., "Tempel," p. 855.
15. Krohn, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
16. Krohn, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
17. Holmberg, *Permaalaisten uskonto*, pp. 108 *sqq.*
18. Oldenberg, *Religion des Veda*, p. 3141.
19. Stengel, *op. cit.*, pp. 14 *sqq.*, 111 *sqq.*, 115, 118.
20. Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, I, 315-325, 518 *sqq.*
21. Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 175, 314, 319.
22. Frazer, *The Dying God*, pp. 9 *sqq.*
23. Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
24. Payne, *History of the New World*, I, 520-523. Preuss, "Die Feuer-götter als Ausgangspunkt zum Verständnis der mexikanischen Religion," in *Mitteilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, XXXIII (1903), pp. 157 *sqq.*, 163. Röck, "Der Sinn der aztekischen Menschenopfer," in *Völkerkunde* (1925), Heft 4-6, pp. 86 *sqq.* Cp. also Sahagun, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, Book VII, chapter 2.
25. Cobo, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*, IV, 85. For more detail relating to the worship of springs among the ancient Peruvians and their magical offerings, see my *Civilization*, pp. 383 *sqq.*
26. Molina, *Fabulas e ritos de los Incas*, p. 27. Cobo, *op. cit.*, IV, 63, 81. See also my *Civilization*, pp. 397 *sqq.*, where a full account is given of the sacrifices of the ancient Incas.
27. Cobo, *op. cit.*, IV, 81.
28. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, I, chapter xix. ("Human Sacrifice").
29. Acosta, *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, I, 344-349 (Hakluyt Society).
30. Petersen, *Om nordboernes gudedyrkelse og gudetro*, pp. 91 *sq.*
31. Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, I, 245 *sqq.* Our main authorities on this sacrifice are Campbell, *Wild Tribes of Khondistan*, and Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India*.
32. Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-58. Macpherson, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-131.
33. Westermarck, *op. cit.*, I, 443.
34. Frazer, *op. cit.*, I, 250.
35. Frazer, *loc. cit.*
36. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to Rocky Mountains*, II, 80 *sq.* Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes of the United States*, V, 77 *sqq.*
37. v. Tschudi, *Peru*, II, 358.
38. See my *Head-Hunters*, p. 367.
39. Frazer, *op. cit.*, I, 240, 241.
40. See my *Civilization*, pp. 410 *sq.*

## CHAPTER XVI

## PRAYER

1. Stengel, *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer*, pp. 72 *sq.* v. Lasaulx, *Über die Gebete der Griechen und Römer*, 1842.
2. Krohn, *Suomen suvun pakanallinen jumalanpalvelus*, p. 169. Holmberg, *Lappalaisten uskonto*, pp. 36 *sqq.*
3. Krohn, *Suomen suvun pakanallinen jumalanpalvelus*, p. 169. Holmberg, *Lappalaisten uskonto*, pp. 36 *sqq.*
4. Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, p. 303.
5. Maret, *The Threshold of Religion*, pp. 33 *sqq.*
5. Plutarch, *Roman Questions*, 61.

6. See Clodd, *Magic in Names*, p. 134.
7. Livy, I, 55, 4; V, 21, 5.
8. Aeschylos, *Agamemnon*, 160.
9. Plato, *Cratylos*, 400 E.
10. *Vedic Hymns*, Part II, 281, 372.
11. Clodd, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
12. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, I, cc. 24, 25. Cp. also Justinus, *Dialogus cum Iudeo Tryphone*, c. 85. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereticos*, II, c. 6. Cp. also Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu*, pp. 132 sqq.
13. von der Goltz, *Das Gebet in der ältesten Christenheit*, p. 129. Heitmuller, *op. cit.*, p. 258.
14. Thus Kopper, in *Unter Feuerland-Indianern*, p. 146 and *passim*, speaks of thanksgiving and other higher kinds of prayer among the Jahngans, but this is exactly one of the evidences to show that the belief in and cult of the Supreme Being Watauinewa is of Christian origin. The South American Indians, in their natural state, have not even a word for "thanks" and thanksgiving prayers of the kind mentioned by Koppers are found nowhere else in South America, not even among half-civilized Indians.

## CHAPTER XVII

## FUNERAL AND MOURNING CUSTOMS. THE CULT OF THE DEAD

1. Wundt, *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie*, p. 214.
2. Karsten, *The Head-Hunters of Western Amazonas*, p. 459.
3. Yarrow, *A Further Contribution to the Study of the Mortuary Customs of the North American Indians (First Report of the Bureau of Ethnology)*.
4. Lehmann, *Zarathustra*, II, 184 sq.
5. See Karsten, *Civilization*, pp. 245, 364, 379.
6. Helm, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 139 sq. Almgren, *Vikingatidens gravskick (Nordiska studier tillägnade A, Noreen, 1904)*.
7. See Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 35 sq.
8. Karsten, *Head-Hunters*, p. 292.
9. See on this point my *Civilization*, pp. 35, note 2, and 243 sq.
10. von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Central-Brasieliens*, pp. 505, 507, 508.
11. Bolinder, *Die Indianer der tropischen Schneegebirge*, p. 238.
12. Bolinder, *Indianer och tre vita*, p. 90.
13. Tregear, *The Maori Race*.
14. See my *Civilization*, pp. 242, 244, 246 sq.
15. Oldenberg, *Religion des Veda*, pp. 572 sq.
16. Nilsson, *Primitive Religion*, p. 10. E. Rohde (*Psyche*, I, 31 sq.) has, I believe, been the first to set forth this theory which, among others, has been adopted by Wundt. In his *Völkerpsychologie* (IV, 156) he explains: "Zuerst begrub man den Leichen um seine Seele in die Tiefe zu bannen. . . . Dann suchte man den gleichen Zweck vollkommener durch die Verbrennung zu erreichen." K. Helm, in his *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, I, 158, gives the same explanation of cremation.
17. The theory set forth by me here as to the ideas underlying cremation—a theory adduced before in my Swedish work, *Inledning till religionsvetenskapen* ("Introduction to the Science of Religion," Helsingfors, 1928)—has recently been confirmed by the researches of the Norwegian folklorist G. Sverdrup, published in a book with the title *Fra Gravskikker till dödstro i nordisk bronsålder* (Oslo, 1933), pp. 107, 114–118.

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18. See Caland, *Die altindischen Todten- und Bestattungsgebräuche*, pp. 59, 174, 189. See also Sverdrup, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
19. Crévaux, *Voyages dans l'Amérique du Sud*, p. 120.
20. Crévaux, *op. cit.*, p. 548.
21. Koch-Grünberg, *Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern*, II, 152. Wallace, *A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and the Rio Negro*, p. 498.
22. See my *Civilization*, p. 249, and note 3. This cult of the soul, however, must be clearly distinguished from those rites which have for their object to keep off the death-demon and who is greatly feared. See below.
23. See Restrepo Tirado, *Los Quimbayas*, 1895.
24. See Karsten, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
25. Grubb, *An Unknown People in an Unknown Land*, pp. 120 sqq.
26. Grubb, *op. cit.*, pp. 160 sqq.
27. Callaway, *Religious System of Amazulu*, Part II. Casalis, *The Basutos*, pp. 248-254.
28. It is needless to mention many instances of this kind in regard to the Bantu tribes, most of whom worship ancestral spirits as their chief gods. I only beg to refer to the detailed account Junod gives of the "ancestor-gods," of the Thongas in South Africa, and whose ideas may be said to be typical of those of the South African Bantu tribes in general. These ancestor-gods have supernatural power, and they can bless their descendants if properly worshipped, but they can also curse by bringing untold misfortune if they are neglected. *The Life of a South African Tribe*, II, 372 sqq., 386, 387, etc. See also Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 88, 89, 92 sq., etc.
29. See Waronen, *Vainajainpalvelus munaissilla suomalaisilla*, pp. 16, 23, etc.
30. Kidd, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
31. See my *Civilization*, pp. 477 sqq.
32. See my *Head-Hunters*, p. 397.
33. Karsten, *Indian Tribes of the Gran Chaco*, p. 194.
34. Karsten, *Civilization*, pp. 246 sqq.
35. Karjalainen, *Jugralaisten uskonto*, p. 99.
36. Karsten, *op. cit.*, pp. 247 sq.
37. Junod, *op. cit.*, I, 143 sqq. Kidd, *op. cit.*, pp. 250 sq.
38. See Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality and the Worship of the Dead*, I, 159 sq. Frazer in his work (pp. 154-159) gives many instances of this kind from Australia, where ceremonial mutilations are very commonly practised after a death. See also Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 453, 459, 466. Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 500, 507, 509, 510. *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 516-522.
39. Azara, *Voyages dans l'Amérique méridionale*, II, 25-27.
40. Brett, *Indian Tribes of Guiana*, pp. 154-156.
41. Preuss, "Menschenopfer und Selbstverstümmlung bei der Todtentrauer in Amerika," in *Festschrift für Adolf Bastian*, pp. 199 sqq. Koch, *Zum Animismus der südamerikanischen Indianer* (*Intern. Arch. f. Ethnogr.*, 1900), pp. 70, 74.
42. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, II, 365.
43. See my *Civilization*, chapter on "Ceremonial Mutilations," pp. 153 sqq.

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